SSS strikers not off the hook, says DoF

Story on Page A2

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

MONDAY, AUGUST 6, 2001 ★★ 64 PAGES 5 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 239 ₱15

'Brod Pete' lives on

PA-XEROX NGA, BROD PETE!
RAISE THE ROOF!

By Christian V. Esguerra

IF watching "Brod Pete" on TV is comic enough, imagine having someone like him at home—he would surely bring the house down.

BROD/ A19

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **304 WW2 bombs kept in lot**
  ACROSS / A17
- **Kim: N. Korea no rogue**
  WORLD / A11
- **Purefoods squares series**
  SPORTS / A20
- **Scribe denies starting QC fire**
  METRO / A23

'Ping has US homes, too'

Corpus team also finds 2 Lacson firms

By Christine Herrera

APART from hundreds of millions of dollars in overseas accounts, Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson Jr. and his wife Alice allegedly own several houses, two firms and other assets in California which they never declared, according to an intelligence team that investigated the senator's alleged hidden wealth in the United States.

Members of the joint military and police intelligence team said they discovered that the Lacsons own houses in downtown San Francisco and in Panorama City in California, sold a house in Laguna Seca Loop in the same state, and put up two firms in posh Beverly Hills in the Los Angeles area.

Working with the help of the US Customs Service in June, the joint team took pictures of the property, and have since submitted the photos to Col. Victor Corpus, chief of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp). *(See full story at right.)*

The Lacsons own a house worth $1 million at 2295 California St. in downtown San Francisco, according to Senior Supt. Rodolfo "Boogie" Mendoza Jr., one of the six team members.

According to team leader Col. Mario Chan of the Isafp, Lacson also owns a townhouse: Suite 73, 14300 Terra Bella in Panorama City.

The INQUIRER accompanied members of the team to Panorama City to cover their investigation, which lasted from June 2 to July 3.

Interviewed by the team, Jun de Guzman, a resident of the 14300 block, said the gated community at Terra Bella consists only of 75 houses. A three-bedroom unit is priced from $150,000 to $200,000, De Guzman said.

Chan said it was interesting to note that Chinese-Filipino businessman Robert Co, whom the team has linked to Lacson, lived in Suite 55 in the same community.

Co and Alice de Perio Lacson set up and registered two import/export and freight services corporations on Jan. 8, 2001, Chan said.

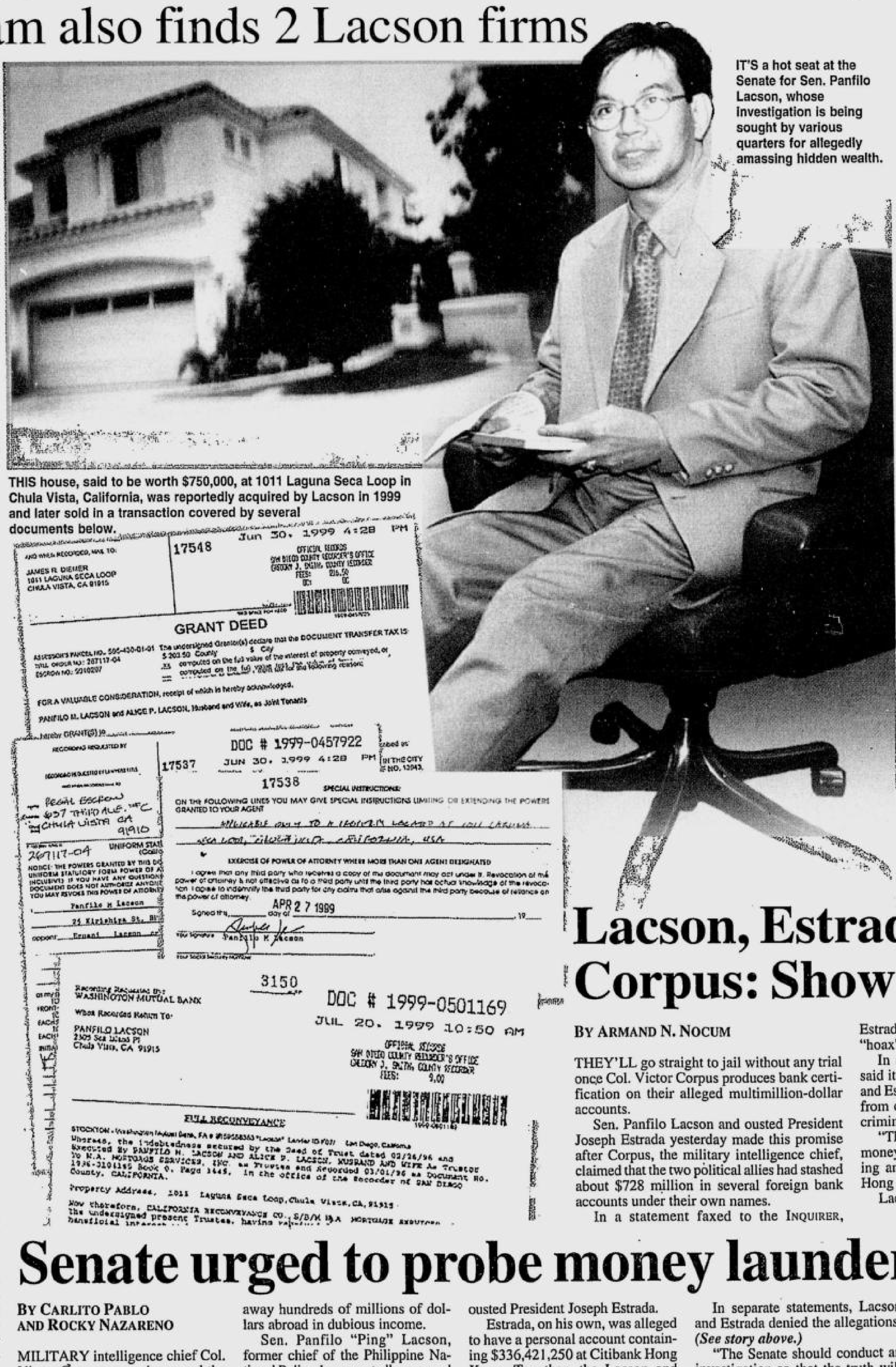
He identified these firms as Orient Light Import/Export Freight Forwarders Inc. and Asia Light Freight International Inc.

The address of both companies is listed as 9440 Sta. Monica Boulevard, 310 Beverly Hills, Chan said. The name listed as the chair of the Asia Light is a certain Estrella Dimaculangan, he said.

Lacson also allegedly maintained another address in the name of Jaime Regacho at 28 Buttercup Court, Alamo, California, Chan said.

"This information was contained in several US Immigration and Naturalization Service I-19 forms which Lacson and his cohorts Director Reynaldo Acop and Senior Supt. Michael Ray Aquino accomplished when they arrived in the United States," Chan said, refer-

PING/ A18



IT'S a hot seat at the Senate for Sen. Panfilo Lacson, whose investigation is being sought by various quarters for allegedly amassing hidden wealth.

THIS house, said to be worth $750,000, at 1011 Laguna Seca Loop in Chula Vista, California, was reportedly acquired by Lacson in 1999 and later sold in a transaction covered by several documents below.

Jun 30, 1999 4:28 PM
17548
JAMES R. DIEMER
1011 LAGUNA SECA LOOP
CHULA VISTA, CA 91915

GRANT DEED

FOR A VALUABLE CONSIDERATION, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged,
PANFILO M. LACSON and ALICE P. LACSON, Husband and Wife, as Joint Tenants

DOC # 1999-0457922
17537 JUN 30, 1999 4:28 PM
17538
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EXERCISE OF POWER OF ATTORNEY WHERE MORE THAN ONE AGENT DESIGNATED
APR 2 7 1999
Panfilo M Lacson

3150
WASHINGTON MUTUAL BANK
When Recorded Return To:
PANFILO LACSON
Chula Vista, CA 91915
DOC # 1999-0501169
JUL 20, 1999 10:50 AM
FULL RECONVEYANCE
Property Address. 1011 Laguna Seca Loop, Chula Vista, CA, 91915

The US money trail

By Christine Herrera and Carlito Pablo

MILITARY and police intelligence agents picked up the scent of a money trail in 1999, and eventually tracked down $728.5 million in 18 bank accounts abroad allegedly held by Sen. Panfilo Lacson, wife Alice and ex-President Joseph Estrada, according to members of an investigating team.

Members of the joint Armed Forces and Philippine National Police intelligence team said they were first tipped off that Lacson might be stashing money abroad when Canadian navy police reportedly nabbed a top Lacson aide, Senior Supt. Michael Ray Aquino, at the Canadian-US border in Nova Scotia in 1999.

Aquino was allegedly trying to cross into the United States carrying $1 million in cash.

The joint team, sent to San Francisco in June to gather evidence against Lacson, pursued the lead and found that the former Philippine National Police chief and some of his men were allegedly involved in "large-scale money laundering" in the United States, Canada and Hong Kong, team members said.

The team eventually unearthed the 18 savings, time and checking accounts, containing a total of $728,500,293, worth nearly P39 billion at the current exchange rate. The accounts are allegedly held singly or jointly by Lacson, his wife

THE/ A18

Lacson, Estrada dare Corpus: Show evidence

By Armand N. Nocum

THEY'LL go straight to jail without any trial once Col. Victor Corpus produces bank certification on their alleged multimillion-dollar accounts.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson and ousted President Joseph Estrada yesterday made this promise after Corpus, the military intelligence chief, claimed that the two political allies had stashed about $728 million in several foreign bank accounts under their own names.

In a statement faxed to the INQUIRER, Estrada described Corpus' allegation as a "hoax" and "complete fabrication."

In a radio interview with dzBB, Lacson said it was "silly" of Corpus to claim that he and Estrada had amassed such loot since 1996 from drug trafficking, kidnapping and other criminal activities.

"That's P40 billion," Lacson said of the money allegedly kept in 18 savings, checking and time deposits in the United States, Hong Kong and Canada.

Lacson said Corpus "need not prove his

LACSON/ A18

Senate urged to probe money laundering raps

By Carlito Pablo and Rocky Nazareno

MILITARY intelligence chief Col. Victor Corpus yesterday urged the Senate to investigate one of its new members for allegedly squirreling away hundreds of millions of dollars abroad in dubious income.

Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson, former chief of the Philippine National Police, has reportedly amassed nearly $400 million singly or in joint accounts with his wife Alice and ousted President Joseph Estrada.

Estrada, on his own, was alleged to have a personal account containing $336,421,250 at Citibank Hong Kong. Together, the Lacson and Estrada accounts totaled $728,500,293.

In separate statements, Lacson and Estrada denied the allegations. *(See story above.)*

"The Senate should conduct an investigation so that the truth will be fully ventilated," Corpus said. "With all his money, Lacson may be able to buy off some courts and judges but not the Senate."

Corpus, chief of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, said he was ready to testify against Lacson.

SENATE/ A19

13 hostages freed; another beheaded

Southcom chief cites military pressure on Sayyaf

By Julie S. Alipala-Inot
PDI Mindanao Bureau
and Carlito Pablo

ISABELA CITY—Thirteen hostages, eight of them children, who were seized by the Abu Sayyaf in Barangay Balobo in Lamitan town, were freed by the bandit group early yesterday.

But another hostage was beheaded.

Lt. Gen. Gregorio Camiling Jr., Southern Command chief, said heavy military pressure forced the bandits to release the hostages.

One of the freed hostages, however, said Abu Sayyaf leader Khadaffy Janjalani ordered their release.

Freed were Hermie Revillas and her son Aries, 8; Gay-gay Santos and her daughter Jay-Anne, 10; Diosdada Taup; Joselito Esteban and his children Maya, 9, and Joey Arlo, 11; Cecilia Ramirez and her daughter Crizelle, 12; Henry Husain, 10, and his brother Herold, 8; and a child named Cesar Ramirez Jr.

Camiling identified the beheaded hostage as Noel Ibañez.

Herold Husain and Cesar Ramirez said they witnessed Ibañez's execution at the boundary of Barangays Bohe Yawas and Kapayawan at dawn yesterday.

Ramirez said Ibañez was shot after he grabbed the gun of one of the bandits and ran away.

"He asked them to loosen the tie around his hands because he wanted to eat . . . then he fought back and tried to grab their guns so he was shot," said Herold Husain.

"After he was shot and killed, an Abu Sayyaf (member) chopped off his head with a bolo. He was

13 HOSTAGES/ A19

SSS shaken by rabble power, not people power

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

OVER the past three months, Philippine democracy has degenerated into rule by the rabble.

The people power that toppled two abusive, corrupt and kleptocratic administrations in 14 years has been transformed into rabble power.

The turning point of this transformation—that gave a perverse form to the sovereign right of the people to change unjust and abusive regimes—was the May 1 attack on Malacañang by the rabble manipulated and unleashed by the counter-elite to overthrow a sitting government whose legitimacy it did not recognize.

From that landmark event, rabble power has rapidly taken grotesque shapes, all pushing Filipino-style democracy toward implosion in an

SSS/ A18

Second FRONT PAGE

BAKA MAPATALSIK RIN SILA?!

SSS strikers not off the hook

IT'S Sunday but the main office of the SSS in Quezon City is open after a nationwide strike disrupted its operations last week. EDWIN BACASMAS

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE SOCIAL Security System employees who joined the strike and crippled operations for three days last week of the state-run pension fund are not yet home-free, the finance department said.

Amid criticism from prominent business leaders of the government's decision to sack SSS president Vitaliano Nañagas III under pressure from protesting SSS employees, Finance Undersecretary Antonio Bernardo said the department and the new SSS president would conduct an investigation of the SSS imbroglio.

Bernardo said they would then decide whether those employees who helped paralyze the fund's operations would face sanctions under civil service rules.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho had appointed Bernardo as SSS officer in charge until the new president, Corazon de la Paz, can report for work this week.

Almost 4,000 SSS rank-and-file and senior management employees joined the strike last week in protest against what they alleged was the "poor management style" of Nañagas.

"There will have to be an investigation of this issue," Bernardo said.

Camacho said he was leaving it up to anyone from the pension fund's 23 million members to file a complaint against the SSS workforce.

Civil Service Commission chair Karina David said the sanctions could range from a reprimand to dismissal.

But she said for the commission to act on the issue, a complaint must be filed either by senior management or any of the pension fund's members.

Camacho has denied, as one source had claimed, that part of the "peace formula" that he had worked out was that no striking employee would be sanctioned provided he or she would report back to work.

A CSC official said a Supreme Court ruling bars government employees from "paralyzing" services. The sanctions would be based on that ruling, the official said.

Businessmen and economists had criticized the Macapagal-Arroyo administration for giving in to pressure from the striking SSS employees as this had created a policy precedent.

Philamlife president Jose Cuisia, a former SSS president and central bank governor, said what the government had done "was really a dangerous precedent because the workers' basis for striking was not justified."

Romulo Neri, economics professor at the Asian Institute of Management, said the move had sent the wrong signal to the foreign community because Nañagas was "reform-oriented."

"Nañagas' reforms were in the right direction and there is a strong suspicion that those who created this are the ones who must be investigated," said Neri who is also director general of the Congressional Budget Planning Office.

Makati Business Club executive director Guillermo Luz had said, in an earlier interview, that the government must pursue the cases against SSS executive vice president Horace Templo and senior vice president Edgar Solilapsi.

Luz said that contrary to the government's claim that the SSS situation was unique, there are similar problems in the Bureau of Internal Revenue, the Commission on Elections, and to a lesser extent in the tourism and education departments.

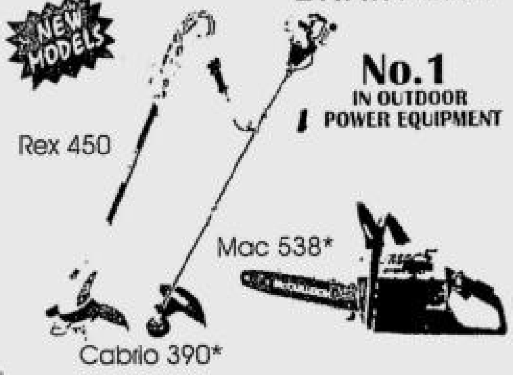
"I am afraid the SSS decision would set a precedent which the government should not have done," Luz said.

Templo and Solilapsi, whose salaries are even bigger than that of the SSS president, were said to have turned their backs on Nañagas and joined the protesters when it became evident that they would be implicated in the investigation of the investment scandal at the SSS that Nañagas had ordered.

The dismissed SSS president also incurred the ire of senior management when he questioned the "atrocious salaries" that many of the executives were getting.

An SSS insider said 48 senior SSS officials were drawing salaries of more than P100,000 a month. Nañagas' basic pay of P150,000 was less than half of the P350,000 that Templo gets monthly.

Another SSS source attested that the executive secretary that Nañagas had inherited from his predecessor, Carlos Arellano III, was paid as much as her boss.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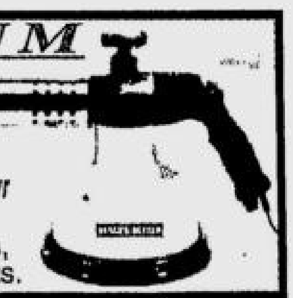
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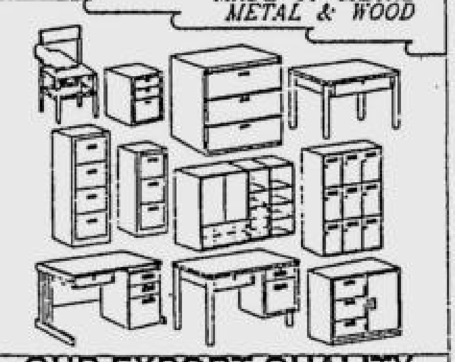
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SSS running out of money

Benefit payments exceeded premiums since 1993

THE NEW Social Security System president Corazon de la Paz has her work cut out for her.

More than the recalcitrants in the SSS work force who drove out her predecessor, De la Paz confronts the specter of a pension fund running out of money.

Citing a Commission on Audit report, Bukidnon Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri described the state-run private pension fund's financial position as "worsening."

In fact, total membership contributions to SSS since 1993 have not been able to sustain benefit payments given out by the agency, the congressman said in a statement.

Last year alone, benefit payments exceeded premium contributions by P3.57 billion, Zubiri said.

"For eight years in a row, benefit payments overshot premium payments and the prognosis that this trend will be reversed this year is not that good," said the lawmaker who chairs the House committee on legislative franchises.

Zubiri said the P3.57 billion did not even include the P4.2 billion that the SSS spent for its operations in 2000.

"So the actual shortfall is P7.77 billion and not just P3.57 billion," he noted.

Ideally, membership contributions should be higher than benefit payments and operating expenses combined.

"But the last time the SSS registered a surplus was in 1992 when contributions surpassed the two expense items by a mere P18.3 million," said Zubiri.

The COA report cited four reasons why benefit payments have outpaced remittances.

These are "numerous benefit enhancements without the corresponding increase in membership rates, low contribution rate at 8.4 percent up to salary credit of P12,000, failure of employers to remit members' contribution and work stoppages."

In the last year alone, the SSS increased pensions by 10 percent across-the-board and funeral benefits from P15,000 to P20,000.

Zubiri said the shortfall in revenues must be corrected, otherwise the SSS would be forced to dip into its Investment Reserve Fund to make up for the deficiency.

However, all this does not mean that the pension fund in the red as it has other sources of income, Zubiri said.

"To its credit, SSS consolidated assets consisting of the SSS Employees' Compensation and Mortgage Insurance Funds reached P181.74 billion by the end of 2000 compared to P176.88 billion the previous year," he said.

Zubiri said that despite the shortfall in premium payments, the SSS was still able to report a total income of P42.66 billion last year mainly on earnings from investments of P12.3 billion and P30.32 billion in members' contributions.

Without this income from investments, the fund would have been in the red as total expenditures, consisting of benefit payments of P33.89 billion and operating expenses of P4.2 billion, reached P38.09 billion.

GUNIGUNDO

Gov't nets P80M from sale of 'hot cars'

REMEMBER the "hot cars" issue that provided one of the most telling blows against the administration of former President Joseph Estrada?

The Bureau of Customs has so far realized revenues of P79,982,245 from the sale of some units, according to Valenzuela Rep. Magtanggol Gunigundo I.

"This is a result of our hard work, pursuit for truth and a continuous vigilance of civil society, media and the masses," Gunigundo said.

Gunigundo was the opposition congressman who blew the whistle on a decision made by Estrada to distribute confiscated luxury vehicles to his Cabinet members.

He started a series of exposés on the "hot cars" from September to November 1999 until Estrada backed down on Nov. 9, 1999 and ordered the recall and sale of the vehicles.

In a report submitted last July, Customs Commissioner Titus Villanueva said the P79-million income was generated mainly from the auction-sale of 31 luxury vehicles with an aggregate amount of P69.742 million.

A court also approved a compromise agreement on 11 units that allowed the BOC to collect P6.492 million in duties and taxes from the consignees of the vehicles.

Some P158,000 were generated from forfeited deposits and registration fees.

The remaining vehicles were forfeited in favor of the government and are scheduled to be auctioned soon.

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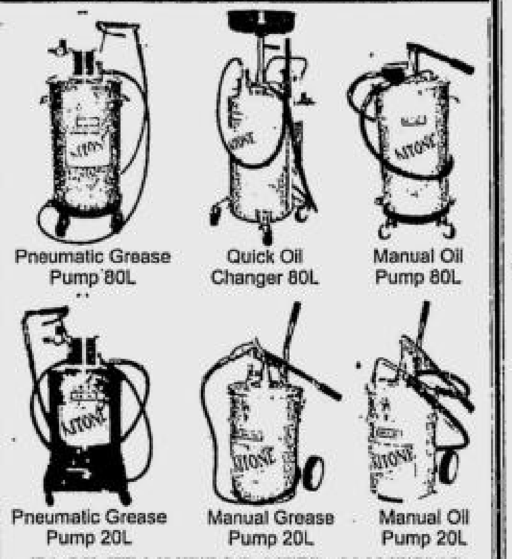

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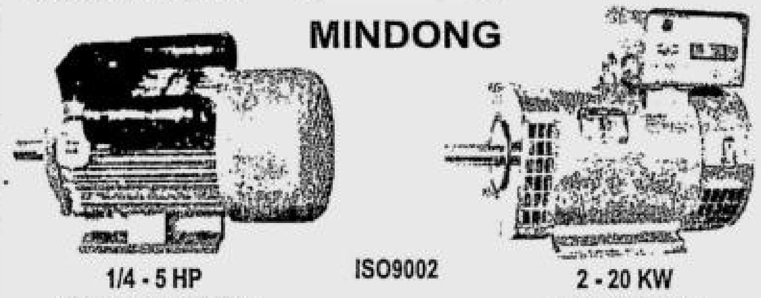

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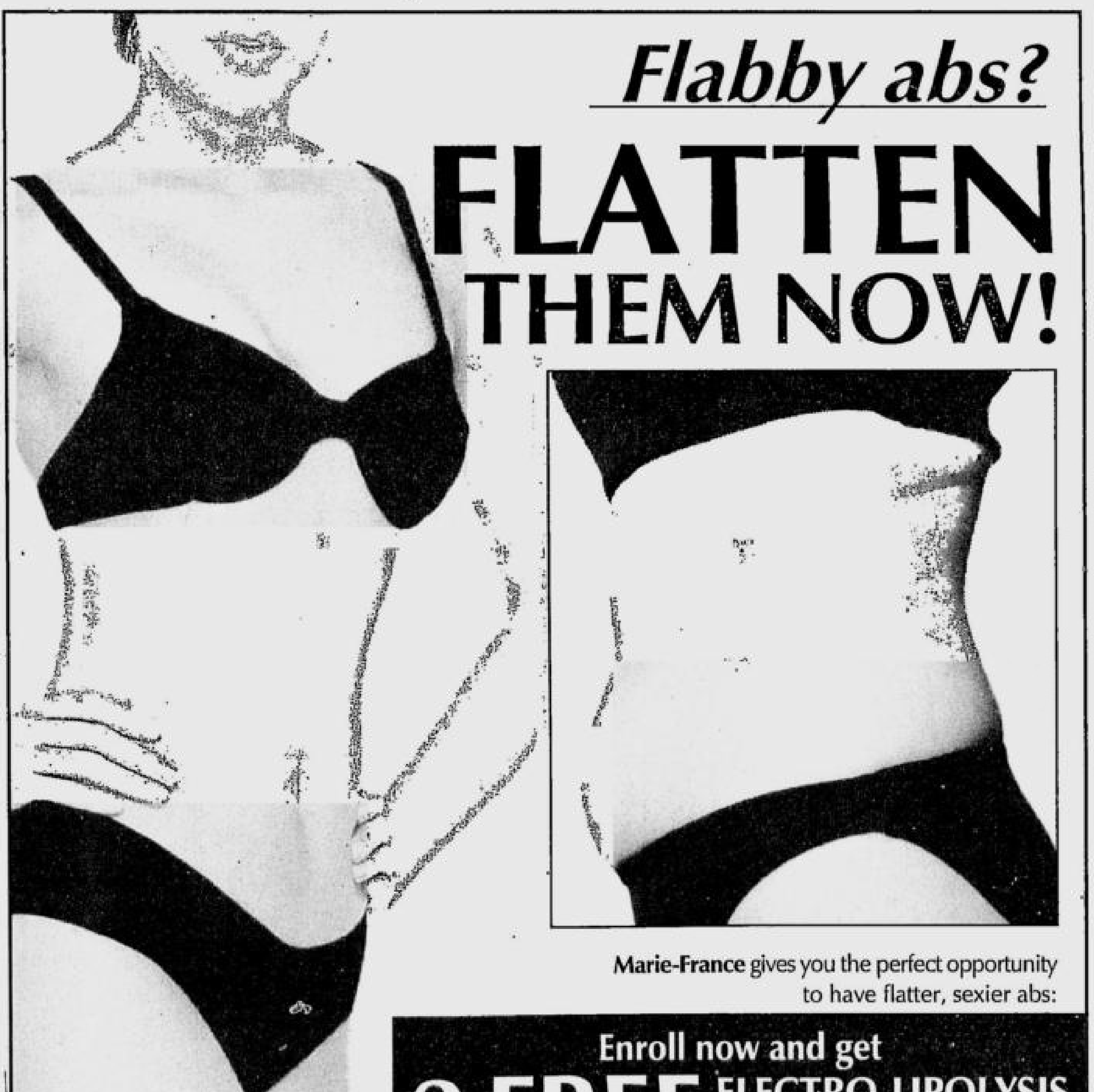
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Dogfight at Domestic airport averted

BY TJ BURGONIO

BUSINESSES operating in the general aviation area (GAA) of the Manila Domestic Airport will not have to relocate until 2010 even after the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 starts operations in December 2002.

This compromise, arrived at after a meeting with airport general manager Edgardo Manda last Thursday, averted a serious conflict between the government and the operators of these businesses.

The GAA, the hub of chartered flight operators and private airline owners, was set to be closed down and relocated out of Manila before the $500-million Terminal 3 starts operations late next year.

The relocation plans are being opposed by the operators who said that they would rather close shop than leave Manila.

An estimated 100 companies, including San Miguel Corp., Ayala Corp., PLDT, Meralco and Jaka Transport Group, are engaged in corporate aviation and have hangars at the general aviation area, said retired Col. Ernesto del Rosario, president of the Federation of Aviation Organization Inc. (Fedavor).

Manda assured the operators that the relocation of the GAA outside of the Naia would not happen until 2010.

"I thought that it would be doable for them if they relocate in 2010 instead of 2002," he said.

Del Rosario said this timetable would give them enough time to prepare.

"Our group's only worry then was that it would be too soon for us to move out in 2002," he said.

Between 2002, when Naia Terminal 3 begins operations, and 2010, the GAA will be housed at the old Manila Domestic Airport terminal, Manda said.

By 2002, Naia 3 will service all international airlines and Naia 2 all domestic carriers.

Manda said, however, that the general aviation area would have to be relocated out of Naia sooner or later so air traffic at the airport would be decongested.

An airport official, who asked not to be named, said that Domestic and charter aircraft contribute at least 37 percent of the traffic at present, said an airport official, who asked not to be named.

Airport authorities are eyeing the Fernando Air Base in Lipa City and Sangley Point in Cavite as possible relocation sites for the GAA.

One of the government's obligations under its concession agreement with the Naia 3 operator, the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. Inc., is to remove and relocate the GAA from Naia.

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IT ALL started with a wish for a 12-year-old boy battling a brain tumor. Now Moy Tenorio's flights of fancy are taking on wings, courtesy of kind-hearted people who have been struck by his dream of flying into the blue horizon.

ROGER MARGALLO

Love of flying sends Moy soaring

Boy with brain tumor gets to sit on 747 pilot's seat

By TJ Burgonio

"I'M now a pilot," quipped Moises "Moy" Tenorio, the boy with a brain tumor who dreams of becoming a pilot, as he emerged yesterday from the cockpit of a specially designed Japan Airlines Boeing 747-400 jet where he was allowed to sit before the controls and hold the joystick.

The 12-year-old looked thrilled as he was toured inside the wide-bodied aircraft, which is painted and decorated with the Disney characters, Mickey and Minnie Mouse.

"This is a rare privilege for me. Thanks to God," said Moy who was cheerful throughout the 10-minute tour of the 416-seat plane which was parked at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

For Moy, the mere sight of the plane, whose body is painted in his favorite aqua, was enough to dispel his anxiety over the results of his radiation therapy, which were to be released that afternoon.

'Amazing'

It's amazing. I never imagined the plane was painted blue, which is my favorite color. When I woke up this morning, I felt very anxious. Now I feel light-hearted," he said.

Moy and 13 children under the care of the ABS-CBN Bantay Bata Foundation were taken on a 10-minute tour of the aircraft's different sections, from economy to first class, to the galley and the cockpit.

Apart from being given the chance to sit on the pilot's seat and hold the joystick, Moy was also briefed on the basics of operating the different instruments by JAL maintenance manager Ishikawa.

At the end of it, he said in jest: "I can't memorize all of these."

Treat for kids

JAL managers had arranged the tour as a treat for the children "who have dreams of flying but who may not be able to realize these due to personal circumstances."

They wanted the children to personally see the specially designed plane, which has been introduced in JAL routes between Narita and other Asian destinations, including Manila, to promote Tokyo DisneySea, Disney's latest theme park. They have been dubbed the "Dream Express Flights."

JAL and Disney, which are celebrating this year their 50th and 100th anniversaries, respectively, have agreed to jointly promote the theme park.

Pia Pascual, JAL assistant manager for passenger sales, said she was moved by the INQUIRER story and photo of Moy viewing planes from the Naia sometime last month. This was why the airline invited him to the inaugural "Dream Express" flight.

Model plane

Moy and the other children were treated to an interactive storytelling and a magician's show at a makeshift kiddie corner at the boarding gate. They then went down the tarmac and waved goodbye to the 320 passengers when the plane took off at about 9:30 in the morning.

Moy, who was accompanied by his sister, Dr. Bena Tenorio, during the tour, was given a model of a JAL aircraft by Junichi Maki, senior manager for sales.

He said he feels blessed by the airline's support for him. Since being featured on the INQUIRER on July 19 and 20, Moy has become the darling of airline owners.

First, a pilot of the state flying school, the Philippine State College of Aeronautics, offered to fly him for free on a training plane one clear Saturday morning this month.

Next, the staff of Lufthansa Technik Philippines gave him a tour of the inside of a Philippine Airlines plane at their Naia hangar. Then came the JAL invitation.

Love of flying

Moy, who had quit school since being diagnosed with a brain tumor in October last year, had expressed a wish to be brought to the Naia. So his sister, Doctor Tenorio, arranged a tour for him with the airport media affairs division. His wish came true on July 17.

"I want to see the facilities here because I wanted to become a pilot," said the boy, the 12th of 13 children.

He idolizes his eldest brother, a US Air Force serviceman, and is very much fascinated with planes.

His family intends to take him on a US tour if the results of his 30-day radiation therapy are positive. So far, his three-month chemotherapy treatment at the Makati Medical Center has reduced the tumor by 50 percent.

"I pray that the results will be good," said Moy.

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AUG. 13-15	9-4:00	ANIMAL FEED FORMULATION AND PRODUCTION (with field trip)	1,732.50
AUG. 15-16	9-5:30	GOAT AND SHEEP RAISING (with field trip)	1,386.00
AUG. 15-16	9-5:30	DOG BREEDING WITH BUY-BACK SCHEME (in cooperation with Bio-Research) (with field trip)	1,386.00
AUG. 15-18		COMPREHENSIVE MUSHROOM GROWING	1,848.00
15-17	9-6:00	(Tropical, Semi-temperate and Temperate)	
18	9-2:00	(with field trip)	
AUG. 16-18	9-4:00	LAYER PRODUCTION (Table Egg) (with field trip)	1,732.50

FOOD COURSES

DATE	TIME	COURSE	DISCOUNTED FEE
AUG. 7-10	9-5:30	COMMERCIAL BREADMAKING AND BAKERY MANAGEMENT	2,079.00
AUG. 8-9	9-5:30	BASIC MEAT PROCESSING	1,540.00
AUG. 10	9-5:30	FLAVORED AND FORTIFIED JUICE	770.00
AUG. 11-14	9-5:30	HOME BAKESHOP	2,310.00
AUG. 13-14	9-5:30	PASTILLAS MAKING	1,540.00
AUG. 16-19	9-5:30	COMMERCIAL BREADMAKING AND BAKERY MANAGEMENT	2,079.00
AUG. 18-19	9-5:30	BASIC MEAT PROCESSING	1,540.00
AUG. 20-21	9-5:30	COMMERCIAL SCALE PROCESSING OF DEBONED BANGUS	1,540.00
AUG 20-21	9-5:30	CARINDERIA: PINOY FOOD OUTLET	2,310.00

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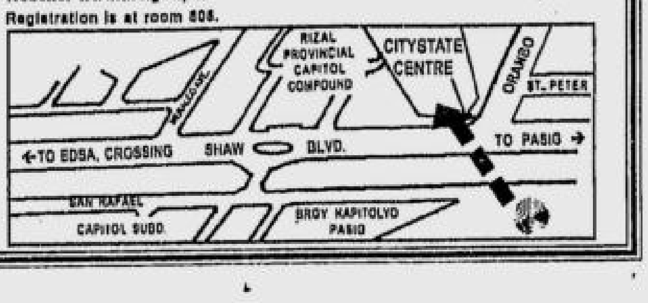

Metro, Visayas workers may get pay raises soon

By G. Lacuarta

LABOR Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas has told workers in Metro Manila and two Visayan regions they can look forward to wage increases within the month.

Sto. Tomas, speaking in NBN-4 TV's TeleDyaryo on Friday, said the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Boards began conducting public hearings last Monday to determine the wage increase to be given to workers in these regions.

Wage increase petitions have been filed before the wage boards of Metro Manila, Western Visayas (Region 6) and Central Visayas (Region 7).

Sto. Tomas said the wage boards would be issuing their decisions before the end of the month.

She said the NCR wage board may be even ready as early as the middle of August.

The Labor Solidarity Movement, which filed for Metro Manila workers, is seeking a P77 increase in the minimum wage, currently pegged at P250.

Labor groups affiliated with the TUCP are seeking a P50 daily wage increase in Region 6.

The Trade Unions of the Philippines and Allied Services (Tupas-LACC) is asking for a P75 daily wage increase for Region 7.

A recent study made by the National Wages and Productivity Commission said workers need a living wage of P509 daily, or P15,269 monthly, to support a family beyond subsistence level.

The militant Kilusang Mayo Uno is supporting a bill filed by Sen. Juan Flavier seeking a P125 wage hike.

KMU chair Crispin Beltran, incoming party-list representative, is expected to file a counterpart bill in the House.

The KMU has refused to file any petitions in the wage boards, which it said should be abolished for being allegedly pro-employer.

STO. TOMAS: Decisions seen before the end of the month

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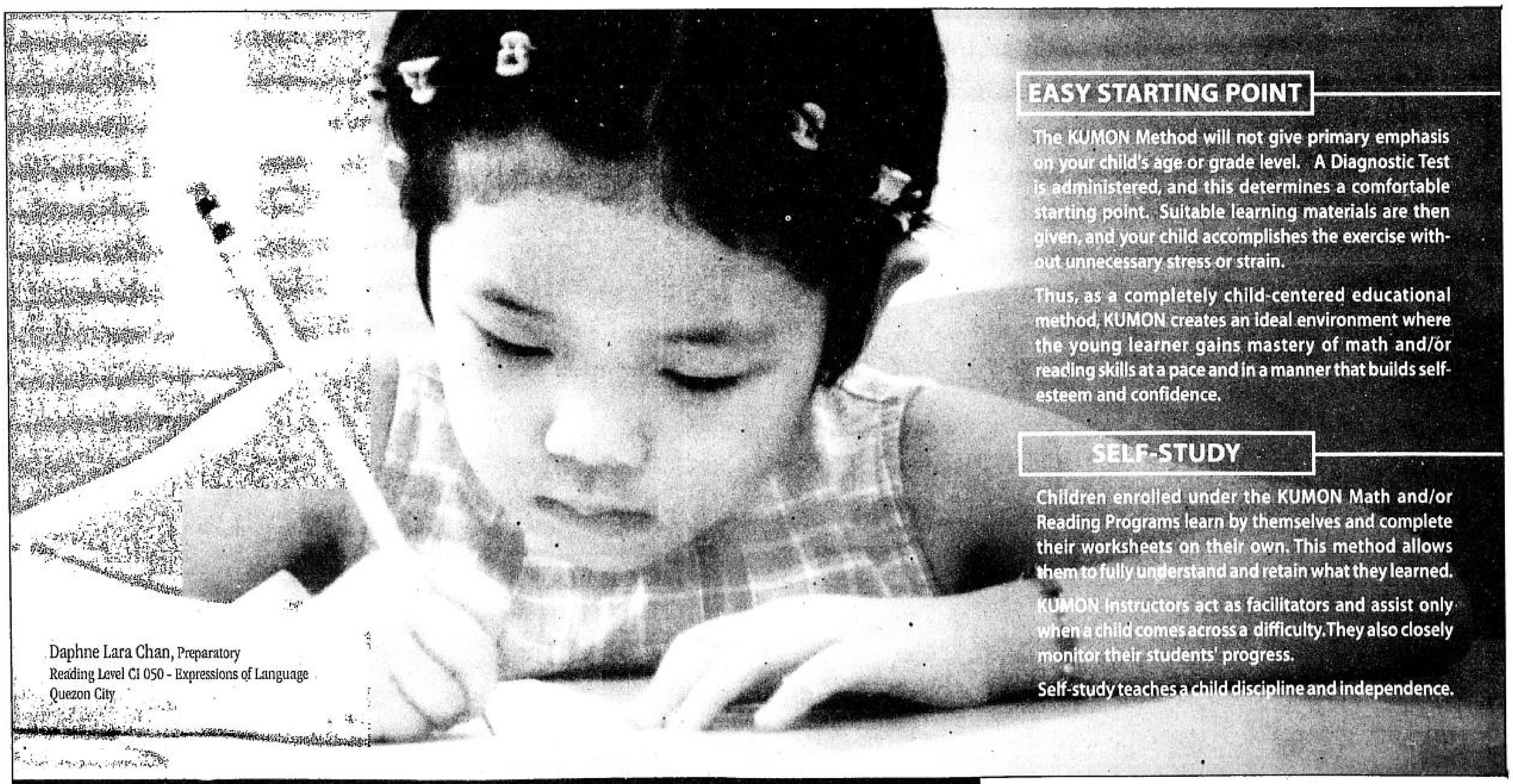

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Absentee voting law will be passed, De Venecia tells Filipinos in Hawaii

By Rocky Nazareno

HOUSE Speaker Jose de Venecia vowed yesterday to push for the passage of an absentee voting law that would allow the more than five million Filipinos living overseas to vote in local elections.

De Venecia said he would work for the passage of the law with Senate President Franklin Drilon.

A bill has to pass through both chambers of Congress before it could be signed into law.

Addressing a meeting of Filipino community leaders in Honolulu, Hawaii, where he was on a two-day visit, De Venecia said an overseas voting law was due, "especially with the advent of the Internet and texting technology across the Pacific and the Indian and Mediterranean Oceans."

He said the measure would be a "multi-partisan priority bill that would be supported by the 12 political parties in the Lakas-led Sunshine Coalition in the House."

It was the same coalition that elected him speaker last month with an overwhelming mandate of 182 votes against the 17 votes garnered by minority floor leader Carlos Padilla.

"The new law will have strong provisions that would ensure the integrity of offshore voting and prevent cheating and ballot manipulation in reporting returns from offshore precincts," De Venecia described the proposed bill in a statement.

De Venecia said he was confident President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo will support the measure and sign it into law once it passes in both houses of Congress.

The proposed bill was welcomed by Consul General Rolando Gregorio and Executive Director Nicanor Penilla of the Philippine consulate in Honolulu.

De Venecia cited the crucial role Philippine diplomatic missions would play in monitoring and ensuring the integrity of the balloting in offshore precincts.

De Venecia was in Hawaii to meet with fund managers from the United States and Japan to propose the creation of a $500-million Philippine Recovery Fund "to act as catalyst for Philippine economic recovery."

De Venecia said the fund will go toward rebuilding industrial and agri-business companies that suffered most in the 1997 Asian financial crisis and the deterioration of the peso from the old exchange rate of P25 to $1 to the latest rate of P53 to $1.

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Mayon calmer; alert may be lowered soon

MAYON volcano is calming down and the danger of another major eruption has eased, scientists said yesterday.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said Mayon continued to spew sulfuric gases above normal levels but the number of volcanic tremors being recorded had gone down during the past 24 hours.

"Mayon is still considered to be in a mild state of eruption but overall assessment of volcanic activity indicates that the prospects for a sudden explosive eruption have diminished," the institute said in a statement.

"The observations indicate a gradual decline in Mayon's activity and if this trend continues in the next few days, (the institute) will consider lowering the current alert level five to alert level four," it added.

Alert five means the volcano is in a state of hazardous eruption while alert four means an eruption is possible within days.

Mayon erupted three times on July 26 and several smaller blasts followed days later. No one was killed in the explosions, which forced some 50,000 villagers to flee to emergency shelters.

The 2,460-meter high mountain has a history of 47 eruptions, the deadliest occurring in 1814 when it buried a town under ash and rocks and killed 1,200 residents. *Reuters*

MAMA Elizabeth with her four daughters. BEN MOSES EBREO

Mary Joyce, Mary Jane, Mary Rose, Mary Grace

BY BEN MOSES EBREO
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—Concerned about the fragile health of the quadruplet daughters of a local couple, the provincial government has created a special body with an integrated continuing health care program for them.

The specially created provincial health board committee will oversee the sustenance of 2-year-old Mary Joyce, Mary Jane, Mary Rose and Mary Grace Cerezo, said Sr. Theresina Estalilla, executive director of the St. Francis Mission (SFM), a non-government organization.

Estalilla said the committee is looking into centralizing the various offers of assistance to the quadruplets.

She said they have to be closely supervised because "they are susceptible to various diseases and vulnerable to other childhood risks."

Last week, Estalilla presented the Cerezo quadruplets to Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit at the Veterans Regional Hospital here.

Dayrit promised to provide medical supplies, supplemental vitamins and free medication.

Dayrit, with Philhealth president Francisco Duque, regional health director Merceditas Cavaneyro, VRH chief Dr. Cirilo Galindez, Nueva Vizcaya Rep. Carlos Padilla, Gov. Rodolfo Agbayani and Dr. Edwin Galapon, United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) provincial coordinator, are pledged as "life support sponsors" of the quadruplets.

Estalilla said the Cerezo family needed protection following the murder of the quadruplet's father, Bernard, in Quezon City last year.

"We are urging the justice department to give protection to them while the case is ongoing," she said.

Bernard Cerezo was shot and killed by a lone gunman at the intersection of Quezon Avenue and Agham Road in Quezon City in August last year.

Elizabeth Cerezo, the quadruplet's mother, said her husband was murdered after he testified before the Quezon City council in a corruption case against a local official.

The Cerezos used to live in Quezon City but returned to Nueva Vizcaya after Bernard's murder.

The quadruplets—Mary Joyce or Tingting, Mary Jane or Wengweng, Mary Rose or Jing Jing, and Mary Grace or Kring Kring—were born on Feb. 16, 1999, in a Quezon City hospital to the then 38-year-old Elizabeth.

The Cerezos have two older children.

Following the murder of Bernard, the responsibility of raising six children fell on Elizabeth, who was then working as a laundrywoman.

Elizabeth's doctors established a trust fund for the quadruplets.

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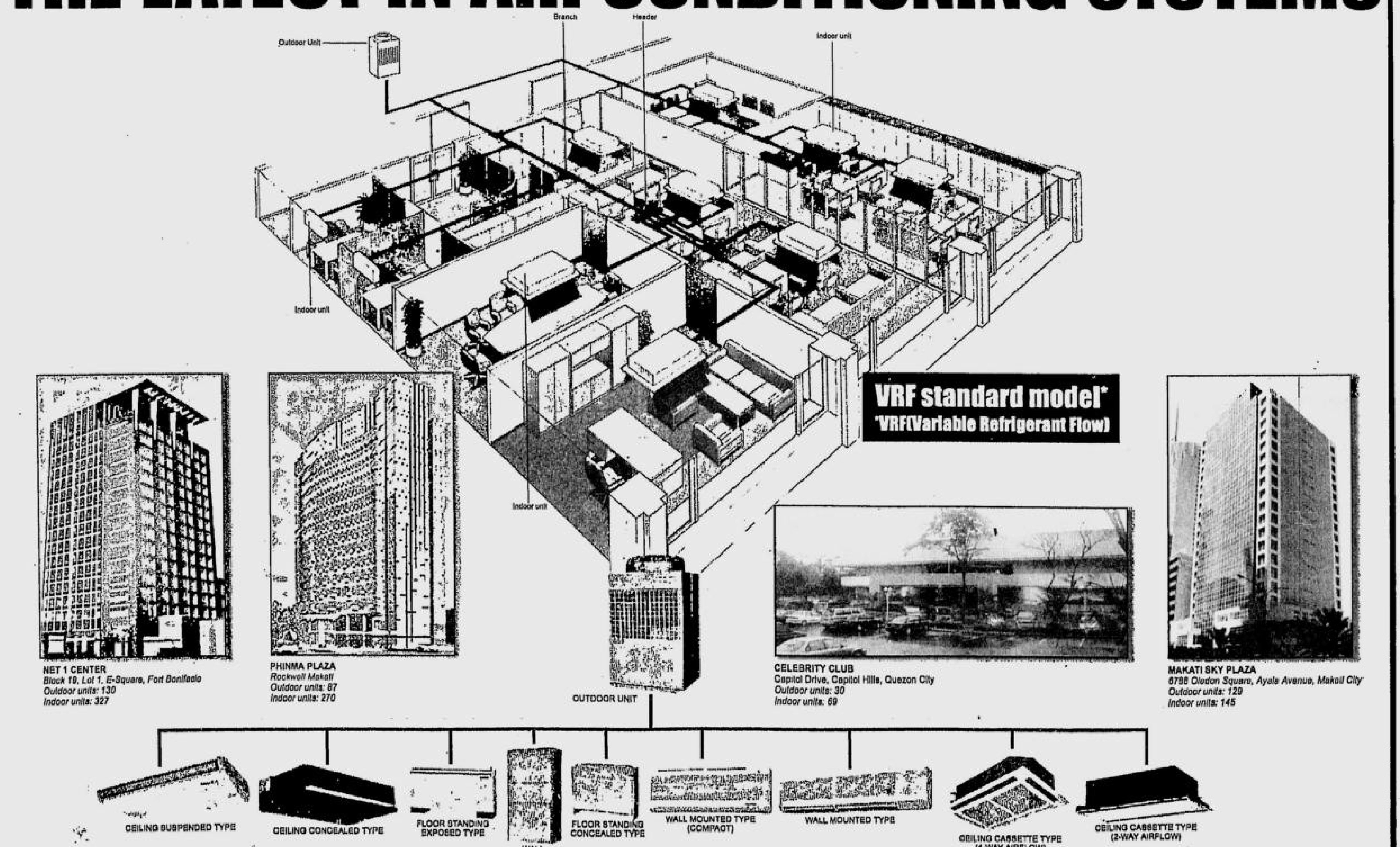

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Peace in Mindanao tops GMA agenda in her visit to Malaysia

IN HER first overseas foray since taking office in January, Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo will visit Malaysia this week as the two neighbors try to end a long and bloody Filipino Muslim rebellion.

Predominantly Muslim Malaysia is currently hosting talks between Manila and the largest Philippine separatist Muslim group. There are expectations of a peace pact being clinched during Ms Macapagal's trip.

Malaysia once provided arms and sanctuary to rebels fighting for a separate Muslim state in the southern third of the predominantly Christian Philippine archipelago.

Kuala Lumpur's tacit support for the armed rebellion stemmed from Manila's historical claim over Malaysia's Sabah state, revived by Ms Macapagal's father, the late President Diosdado Macapagal, in 1963.

Analysts said Ms Macapagal and Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad would sidestep "prickly issues" and focus on ending decades of fighting in Mindanao so that they could speed up development of border areas for mutual benefit.

"President Macapagal's visit is significant to improve relations with Malaysia as it highlights positive elements of the bilateral ties rather than the more difficult aspects," Carolina Hernandez, political science professor at the University of the Philippines, told AFP.

"Difficult issues like the Sabah dispute, Malaysia's alleged past involvement in the Muslim rebellion as well as overlapping claims over several islets in the South China Sea will be put on the back burner," Hernandez said.

But she added, "this is a good strategy" by Ms Macapagal, who wants Malaysia to mediate and end Manila's costly war with the Muslim rebels to pave the way for investments to revive the Philippine economy.

The Philippines is being shunned by many foreign investors concerned over a spate of kidnappings, mostly in the southern Philippines.

A smaller Muslim rebel group, the Abu Sayyaf, has been responsible for the kidnappings of several foreigners over the last year and Ms Macapagal hopes to pin them down once peace is forged with the MILF.

Ms Macapagal had been pushing for a lead role by Malaysia in bringing about peace in the war-wrecked Mindanao region way back when she was vice president in her predecessor President Joseph Estrada's administration.

Estrada, who was not on good terms with Mahathir and who pursued an all-out war against the MILF, was toppled by Ms Macapagal in a popular military-backed uprising in January.

Ms Macapagal said she chose Malaysia as her first overseas destination to "thank Prime Minister Mahathir for helping us attain lasting peace in Mindanao."

Malaysia's envoy in Manila, Arshad Hussain, said if a peace agreement emerged during Ms Macapagal's two-day trip from Tuesday, "it will add meaning to the visit not just in the context of Malaysia-Philippine relations but in the context of bringing peace and stability in the Philippines itself.

"Malaysia as a close neighbor will leave no stone unturned to bring about peace and stability in the southern Philippines," he told AFP.

Arshad said officials were preparing for the inking of memoranda of understanding in information technology, tourism and health during Ms Macapagal's state visit, the first by a Philippine leader since 1993.

Trade between the Philippines and Malaysia last year was more than $2.4 billion. Malaysia is the Philippines' eighth largest trading partner.

The balance has been in the Philippines' favor since 1998, when Malaysia began importing more of semiconductor and electronic components which are key inputs for its manufactures.

Ms Macapagal said she would discuss with Mahathir efforts to revive the so-called East Asian Growth Area covering the southern Philippines, eastern Malaysia, Brunei and northern Indonesia.

She is also scheduled to hold talks with top potential investors and meet the thousands of largely semi-skilled Filipinos working in Malaysia. AFP

President goes on pilgrimage to Antipolo for safe journey

DAYS before embarking on her first foreign trip, President Macapagal-Arroyo has been consulting with her advisers, businessmen and others who could offer her tips on her visit to Malaysia.

Yesterday, she consulted a higher power when she made a pilgrimage to the Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage Church in Antipolo City.

The President joined churchgoers in Antipolo to ask for a safe journey to Malaysia where she will start a three-day state visit on Aug. 7.

She also reportedly prayed for peace in the country as well as solutions to its numerous problems.

Ms Macapagal was applauded by churchgoers on her arrival at the shrine. She was welcomed by Antipolo Bishop Protacio Gungon, Rizal Rep. Victor Sumulong and local officials.

Before the start of the 11 a.m. Mass, the President was introduced by the celebrant, Fr. Reynante Tolentino.

Father Tolentino said it was laudable of the Chief Executive to give priority to her Christian duties.

He said that just like any other person, the President came to Sunday Mass to implore God's guidance and intervention to overcome the country's problems.

"It is delightful to know that the President is here among us. She is an economist, an expert in business, and she joins us here in prayer for our country. She turns to God for guidance in solving the problems of the nation," Tolentino said.

Ms Macapagal received the priest's special blessing for her state visit to Malaysia at the end of the Eucharistic celebration.

After the Mass, the President shook hands and met with local parishioners.

She was ushered into the parish office to offer her special intentions before the original image of the Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage.

Parish officials said they keep the original image of the Virgin Mary, estimated to be more than 400 years old, in a special place inside the church.

MALACAÑANG PHOTO

PRESIDENT Macapagal receives blessings from Rev. Fr. Reynante Tolentino at the Shrine of Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage in Antipolo City.

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Labor trouble threatens operations of giant pharmaceutical company

BY G. LACUARTA

LABOR unrest threatens to disrupt the operations of pharmaceutical giant Glaxo Smithkline Philippines, the biggest drug company in the country after the international merger of Glaxo Wellcome and Smithkline Beecham.

The company's new management has been accused by its workers' union of implementing new personnel policies without consulting employees and attempting to purge its work force through union busting.

Rainier Guzman, president of the Sandigan ng Kawani Filipino sa Glaxo Smithkline, said the firm has begun implementing its new "unadjusted calls" policy which requires its sales force, or medical representatives, to make up for missed doctor calls when they go on leave.

Each medical representative is required to complete 15 to 20 doctor calls per day. Under the new policy, a three-day leave would mean a backlog of 45 to 60 calls the med reps would have to make on top of their daily call requirements when they return to work.

"While it is true that we opted not to use our leave credits under the old adjusted call policy, we were compensated because these could be converted into cash," Guzman said.

"Under the new policy, the company is in effect telling us that we have to suffer consequences if we go on leave because we have to make up for doctor calls lost during those days," he said.

Guzman said they enjoyed the old adjusted call policy under their collective bargaining agreement with Smithkline Beecham.

He said the adjusted call policy was the generally accepted practice in the pharmaceutical industry and was practiced by big drug firms like Wyeth, Pfizer, Aventis, Janssen and Unilab.

The Glaxo Smithkline union also protested alleged management attempts to purge the workforce through the implementation of a "partial cessation of field force operation."

Guzman said a number of med reps have been handed termination papers effective the end of the month as a result of the cessation order.

Guzman said the cessation order was issued by management as a last resort to bust the union, which is made up mostly of med reps who oppose the new policies.

He said the cessation order was aimed at all 165 sales personnel from the former Smithkline Beecham, "although the merger with Glaxo Wellcome was supposed to be a marriage of two equals."

The union has filed cases against Glaxo Smithkline Philippines before the National Conciliation and Mediation Board for violation of their CBA and the National Labor Relations Commission for unfair labor practices, harassment and union busting."

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OPINION

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Miscalculation

EDITORIAL

IT is fitting that Sen. Blas Ople chose the phrase "the guns of August" to label the reported Senate offensive the opposition was set to launch this month. Taking off from the title of Barbara Tuchman's popular history of the origins of World War I, the Senate opposition's initiative—apparently a combination of high-impact exposés and backroom maneuverings—was designed to wrest control of the upper chamber and, not coincidentally, erode President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's moral high ground.

The choice is fitting, but for reasons Ople did not foresee. Tuchman's book and indeed the phrase itself are monuments to miscalculation. Her thesis is that, in the tragic month of August 1914, the whole world blundered into a war, then the most destructive in history. Thus, the idea embedded in the phrase "the guns of August" (an idea that US President John F. Kennedy did much to popularize) is not a positive one, but entirely negative: the road to disaster is paved with one miscalculation after another.

That the Senate opposition miscalculated on the Mike Arroyo-Bing Rodrigo-Malou Nuñez affair is now obvious for everyone to see. Instead of starting with a bang, the new opposition has ended its first offensive with a whimper. How did the new opposition, led by Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Sen. Edgardo Angara, the head of the biggest opposition bloc, come to such grief? It seems they badly miscalculated—not just once, but twice.

Without so much as actually talking to Rodrigo, the supposed source of damning evidence linking the First Gentleman to consummated bribery, the big guns of the opposition opened fire. Now that Rodrigo has clarified that she had only heard about Arroyo's involvement, and now that Nuñez has stated that her knowledge of Arroyo's complicity was limited to text messages, the opposition has to beat a hasty retreat.

But if the fallout from this dud widens over the next few months, then it will become clear that the opposition in the Senate also miscalculated in another, altogether more important, sense. They misread the public's gray mood before Ms Macapagal's first State of the Nation Address—a sense of drift and despair—as a green light for more scandal.

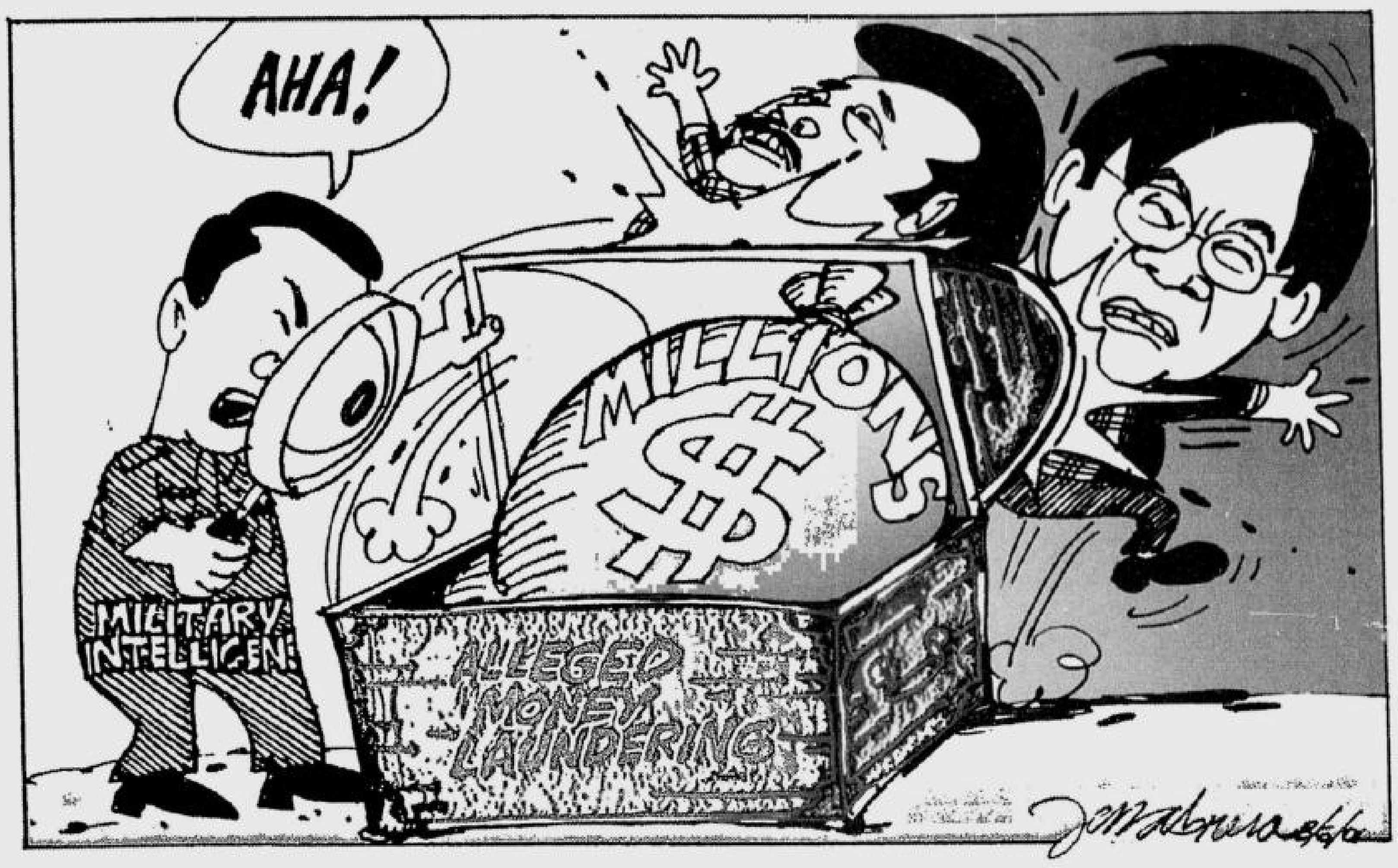
As anyone outside the halls of Congress could have told them, the country needs to get moving forward, not in circles, or in the vicious cycle of the politics of recrimination. It is fair to say that the public gave them the benefit of the doubt on their accusations, but now that the denials are on record, they should be ready to reap the whirlwind of public scorn and skepticism.

This will be unfortunate, because in our democratic scheme of things, the opposition plays a key role in governance. Opposition is necessary, but for it to work it must be seen as credible. But how credible can the opposition in the Senate be if it does not do its homework, if it prefers to oppose by soundbite, if it makes sensational claims it cannot support?

The opposition seems to be guided by "weather-weather" politics, and the unspoken assumption that there is no qualitative difference between the previous administration and the present one, that the present distribution of power, especially in the houses of Congress, is merely a matter of numbers. That would be another, graver, miscalculation.

If the evidence in the courts is any indication, the highest reaches of the previous administration were organized almost like a criminal enterprise. That is what all the cases against former President Joseph Estrada are about. In this context, the relegation of the majority coalition to the minority (including three senators who voted to open the second Jose Velarde envelope and thus ought to have known better) is not a mere rearrangement of political furniture, but a lesson in the limits of power.

In the race for the Senate presidency, Angara belittled what he called "an imagined moral mandate." That mandate, however, was responsible for placing him and his colleagues exactly where they are today: in the minority.



Will the police please stop cell phone snatching?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

WHAT'S happening to our metropolis? Reading the Metro section is so depressing and scary. In last Saturday's Metro, there were 27 stories, 12 of them about killings. On the front page were the stories of a man who beheaded his lover and her 2-year-old son, two teenagers who were killed by cell phone snatchers, both on Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City, and a follow-up story on the murder of harpist Tadao Hayashi.

What is significant is that cell phone snatching is getting out of hand. Snatchers now don't hesitate to kill just to get the precious phones. A college student, Jether Jarnes Castillo, 19, who was going home to Marikina, was shot in the head when he fought off snatchers who tried to steal his cell phone near the Sandiganbayan building. But the most heart-rending story is that of Maria Joanisa M. Pudadera who was stabbed to death by a snatcher while fighting for her cell phone, her father's birthday gift to her.

Joan had long pined for a Nokia 3210 cell phone. According to the story by Neni Sta. Romana-Cruz, she would not have any other gift, and even spurned a vacation in her parent's hometown in Leyte, just to have that phone. It cost P6,000 and her father, a bus driver, had to save for months to have the money to pay for it. When they were finally able to buy the phone, Joan was so happy she toyed with it the whole day and even slept with it beside her. But only a day after that happy day, she was dead because of the phone.

While she and a friend were in a jeepney on the way home to Tandang Sora, a snatcher grabbed her backpack with the beloved Nokia inside.

How she fought for that phone. She clung to her backpack as the snatcher tried to tear it away from her hands. Only after she was stabbed several times did she let go.

The snatchers in both cases are still unidentified and free to do their thing again.

* * *

The popularity of cell phones and their high cost have spawned a lucrative market in stolen units. Many young people simply must have one but because they cannot afford the price of new unit, they settle for stolen ones which are cheaper. Go to Recto in Manila and you will see many stalls selling second-hand units, in spite of a law penalizing fencing, or selling stolen goods. There is such a big demand for them that snatchers are busy supplying stores. Storeowners buy the phones, no questions asked, to replenish their stocks. They are displayed in plain view of the public.

What is the police doing? Beyond issuing a pamphlet advising how to avoid having one's cell phone stolen, exactly nothing. I have yet to hear of a snatcher arrested or a fence raided. (One of the tips is not to resist the snatchers but try to remember their faces.)

Stolen units can be deactivated by the phone company so that they become useless to the thieves or their buyers. But units using pre-paid cards cannot be deactivated, so the phone companies and their manufacturers have to devise ways to solve this problem and in general curb the theft of units. Right now, the only way is to subscribe to the phone company and not use pre-paid cards.

But cell-phone snatching has become so rampant that it may not be too much to ask the police to form a special force to go after snatchers and fences.

How many more people will be killed before the police seriously address this growing menace?

* * *

The public can help by not buying second-hand units. Each time you buy one, you encourage the snatchers and the fences. You think you're saving money, but you are encouraging crime. The next victim may be you or your friend or family member. If you can't afford a new unit, be content without any. Or you can save until you can afford one.

If you already have one, don't display it in public places. If you have to use it, go to a safe place, such as near security guards or policemen. Don't hold it when you are walking or riding a public conveyance. If it is in your bag, hug the bag in front of you. Don't put it on top of tables in restaurants. And don't lend it to anybody.

There are only two ways to save your cell phone: be alert and use your common sense.

* * *

Several columns ago, I suggested here a song titled, "Bangkang Papel" because paper boats have become a popular subject of conversation since President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo mentioned them in her State of the Nation Address. It seemed such a romantic and nostalgic subject for a song.

Reader Mark Malanum commented by e-mail that "there is, in fact, a song that does have paper boats as its theme. I heard the song in 'Batibot' and it may well in fact be entitled 'Bangkang Papel.' It's a simple song expressing the joy found by children in playing with paper boats."

* * *

Today's joke: It is a Mike joke, sorry to say, but it is only a joke.

MAN kneeling at the confessional: Bless me father for I have sinned.

PRIEST: *Ano ang kasalanan mo?*

MAN: *Ako po ay sinungaling, sugarol, lasenggo, babaero, tumatanggap ng suhol...*

PRIEST: Erap, *ikaw ba 'yan?*

MAN: *Hindi po. Si* Mike *na po ito.*

Banana republic

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

A COUPLE of weeks ago, an item appeared in the papers about President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo dressing down Agrarian Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza. Apparently, the President was unhappy with Braganza's performance. She was unhappy in particular that the agrarian reform secretary was spending too much time on a 500-hectare property in Mindanao to the exclusion of other pressing matters. The attention was undue, moreover, in that the 500-hectare land, currently planted to bananas, was outside of the scope of land reform. The secretary wasn't just doing his job, he was also barking up the wrong tree.

Some of the reports also mentioned that Braganza tried to dodge the bullet by shifting the blame to his lieutenants. The Manila Times, which is now owned by Dante Ang, the President's publicist, has since been targeting Braganza with particular ferocity, giving rise to rumors that he is on his way out.

But I've learned over the last couple of weeks that there's far more than meets the eye here. To begin with, it isn't true that Braganza tried to shift the blame to his lieutenants. What is true is that he tried to reason out with the President, but was not given the opportunity. Other Cabinet members swiftly admonished him to not contradict her in public.

But the more important fact is that there is nothing undue about the attention Braganza has been giving the 500-hectare property in Mindanao. Maybe he has neglected other aspects of his job (that is possible). But he has been doing his job as agrarian reform secretary by giving utmost importance to the 500-hectare property in Mindanao.

That property is the Davao Penal Colony (Dapecol), a government property that is currently leased to the Floirendo family at the most disadvantageous terms to the government. It falls completely under land reform. The success of "land-reforming" that land would go a long way to assuring the success of land reform itself in the country. It would set a precedent unlike any other.

The history of Dapecol is an interesting one, as Jun Borras, Steve Quiambao and Danny Gatche point out in a paper. The Davao Penal Colony was originally created in 1931 by American Governor-General Dwight Davis to serve as a rehabilitation center for prisoners. It was a 28,816-hectare compound that was meant to be farmed by prisoners, so they could rejoin society as useful citizens. The reality did not prove as rosy. The penal colony often served only to provide free labor to government and private individuals. After World War II, the penal colony became a profitable venture for public officials and private individuals alike who really ought to have been put there for being criminals. It underwent a process of privatization, shrinking from more than 28,000 hectares (some say more) to 5,212 hectares, which is its current size.

It was President Elpidio Quirino who began the process, which went down the line among presidents (excepting Carlos Garcia, certainly including Diosdado Macapagal) up to Ferdinand Marcos. The land was either given away for free or sold for a song. Where the land was bought, it cost only P200 per hectare in the 1950s, a pittance for a hectare of prime land even by the standards of those days. There were two groups of people that benefited from this show of government benefaction. The first were the abaca planters, when there was a strong demand for Philippine hemp abroad (this was in the 1950s). And the second were the banana planters, when abaca yielded to synthetics, and when a strong demand for bananas arose, particularly from the Japanese market. This was in the 1960s and 1970s.

Well, there was a third group of people who benefited from these transactions, and they were the government officials. They at least did not give the land or sell it for a song.

The beneficiaries of the grant or preferential sale of the land are the ones now fiercely contesting land reform. Some by legal means, by seeking deferment of the application of land reform to the plantation sites for another 25 years, as former Agriculture Secretary Roberto Sebastian proposed. Some by pricing their land beyond land reform. Worldwide Agricultural Development Corp., Tadeco Central, Panabo Hemp Co. and Nesfarm are offering their lands at P750,000 per hectare. Marsman is offering to sell its own land for P1 million per hectare. All these presumably reflect market rates. Even allowing for four decades of inflation, assuming that these people or their companies bought their lands (the Floirendos got their 3,000 hectares chiefly as reward for being a Marcos crony), the difference between P200 and P1 million is mind-boggling. Truly, behind every great wealth is a great crime. Or carpetbaggers have a way of hiding their original crime in cries of righteous indignation.

And some by plain force. If the farmers' groups in the area are to be believed, calling for land reform is infinitely more hazardous to health than cigarettes.

The only part of the penal colony that hasn't yet been privatized is the 5,212 hectares that Braganza has been giving "undue" attention to. The people opposing his effort to put the land under land reform say it lies out of the pale of the agrarian reform code. CARP says that penal colonies are exempt from land reform. But, as Borras, Quiambao and Gatche also point out, CARP is also clear about one other thing: those lands are exempt **unless** they are no longer being used for the original purpose for which they were reserved. Then they become subject to land reform.

The remaining 5,212 hectares of Dapecol land are no longer just a place where convicts may see that crime does not pay. They are now a place where non-convicts see that crime does pay. They have been leased for farming to Tadeco and other companies owned by the Floirendos. *(Concluded tomorow)*

Victor Corpus' bombshell

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THAT was quite a bombshell detonated by Col. Victor Corpus, chief of the AFP Intelligence Service, in yesterday's INQUIRER. He alleged that between the two of them, former President Joseph Estrada and Sen. Panfilo Lacson maintained 18 bank accounts in the United States and Hong Kong amounting to about $1 billion by now. This allegation about secret bank accounts of Estrada and Lacson has been the subject of rumors, and our courageous INQUIRER colleague Mon Tulfo has been writing about it. But this is the first time that the accounts were detailed complete with the name of the banks and the account numbers.

* * *

What is curious about the revelations on which Corpus is staking everything is that two new senators are implicated: Lacson, who is said to have eight personal accounts totaling $211,388,420 in the United States and Hong Kong, apart from several accounts in his wife's name, and Sen. Loi Estrada, who is said to have in her name a Hong Kong account containing $180 million. The readers' reaction, doubtless, would be akin to that when we first heard of the Marcos millions in the exposé made by the San Jose Mercury News in the United States in the early 1980s. One billion dollars is now worth more than P53 billion, which would be about 7 percent of the country's budget for 2002.

Certainly it doesn't help Lacson that two of his most trusted aides during his days as chief of the now defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force have fled abroad and are now being hunted by both US and Philippine authorities. As they say in law, flight means guilt.

* * *

The implication of two senators in the Corpus exposé dumps the case on the lap of the Senate. Yesterday I called up Senate President Frank Drilon who said that going by what he read in the INQUIRER, the allegations of these secret bank accounts are "very serious." I asked him what the chamber would do, and he said there are two resolutions affecting Lacson now pending in the chamber. One is the resolution filed by Sen. Robert Barbers seeking an investigation of the explosive allegations made by Angelo "Ador" Mawanay, a former PAOCTF civilian agent, which Barbers has requested to be referred to the committee on public order that he chairs. The second is a resolution filed by Sen. Ramon Revilla seeking a probe of Tulfo's allegations, which, Drilon said, was referred to the justice committee chaired by Sen. Francis Pangilinan.

But with the new charges raised by Corpus against Lacson, the Senate chief said that "off the top of my head," he could think of a joint investigation of the senator, with the blue ribbon committee chaired by Sen. Joker Arroyo (yes, he has finally accepted it after all the misgivings he made in public about its jurisdiction) as the primary committee, with the justice committee as the secondary committee, jointly with public order. Drilon said the Senate will finish filling up the various committees by Monday or Tuesday, and then plans for the joint investigation on the Lacson case could be firmed up.

* * *

I agree with the Senate president that from the standpoint of practicality, joint committee hearings appear best in this instance. In fact, as this columnist sees it, the Corpus exposé opens many facets which could involve other committees. For instance, the ethics committee, which remains without a chair until now, could get involved here. It's good to keep in mind that the alleged accumulation of wealth and the activities that resulted in it were said to have been undertaken by Lacson and Loi Estrada before they became senators; but if the accounts are maintained now that they are senators, that would involve the ethics committee. Sen. Juan Flavier used to complain that he took the ethics committee in the 11th Congress because nobody wanted it. Well now, with this new case, perhaps there will be a scramble for this committee.

Recall that the Macapagal administration is committed to passing an anti-money laundering law before September, after this country was named among the 17 or so countries classified as international havens for money laundering. Meaning that we allegedly hide in our banks plenty of foreign ill-gotten wealth. An international financial task force formed to go after the money-laundering havens meets in Europe this September to review this list under the direction of the United States. Of course, the Corpus exposé, if true, would make the United States a bigger haven for dirty money than the Philippines despite the United States' strong anti-money laundering law. So that there would be little point in the United States moralizing on the issue.

But that's beside the point here. The fact is that the administration is committed to passing that bill and here is what could be the biggest case so far of money laundering in reverse—from Philippine sources to foreign banks instead of foreign sources to local banks. The committee on banks, which will handle the anti-laundering bill, could certainly look into the Lacson case in aid of legislation.

* * *

It's also good to remember that up to this point the plunder case against Estrada has hinged on evidence of unexplained wealth unearthed here and divulged mainly during the Senate impeachment hearings. There was no suggestion during the trial about foreign accounts in Erap's name. The Corpus revelations open new cases which, presumably, once verified, will just be added to other evidence to buttress the government's arguments in the plunder case.

On the other hand, I was talking to a topnotch lawyer about the revelations on the alleged Erap and Lacson foreign bank accounts, and he opined that at the very least, this could be covered by the law on forfeiture, which is very simple. If a public official can't explain his wealth in relation to his income, then the law says the money is automatically forfeited, and the burden of proving that it's not ill-gotten shifts to him.

* * *

What's going to be tough for both Estrada and Lacson is that even at this point, citizens are likely to believe the Corpus exposé, inasmuch as there are names of banks and numbers of accounts. What's equally tough for them is that citizens are willing to believe that both of them could only have accumulated such a mind-boggling fortune only from dirty sources such as smuggling and drug trafficking, as there is no business here that could possibly yield so much money in such a short period of time.

During the 1998 elections, rumors floated in the media about the alleged involvement of candidate Joseph Estrada in drug activities. It was said that the US Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) already had the goods on him but it did not want to make them public as this would be misconstrued as meddling in local politics. Many in the media were unwilling to believe this, including myself. But if the Corpus exposé is substantiated, this would lead everyone to only one conclusion. I wonder what the DEA has to say now.

Defining Mindanao

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Datu Amir Baraguir

DRUMBEATERS for the 10th Mindanao Business Conference or 10th Minbizcon depict Mindanao as a profitable market for goods and services.

The screaming headlines in Manila and elsewhere paint a different picture, though. Their mention of Mindanao evokes a number of images that range from the not-so-flattering to the downright revolting.

But what does "Mindanao" really mean? Obviously, it means many things to different people.

To objective historians and geographers, "Mindanao" is a term originally used by foreigners when referring to Maguindanao—a creek traversing the present-day Cotabato City—and the settlement around it in the 16th century.

As Maguindanao grew from a small backwater town into a powerful kingdom in the 17th century, spanning a good part of the island, so did the foreign concept "Mindanao." As the two words became virtually synonymous during the Spanish period in the Philippines, the whole southern mainland, came to be called Mindanao. This included those outside the domain and sovereignty of the Maguindanao Sultanate, such as the northern and northeastern fringes and the southern tip of Zamboanga.

When the Americans inherited the Philippines from Spain, they adopted the nomenclature used by their predecessors. Thus, "...and Sulu" was always appended to "Mindanao" when the Americans in the early 1900s referred to these parts.

Subsequent Philippine governments, however, used the word to encompass not only the mainland but also the former realm of the Sulu Sultanate, excluding Palawan and North Borneo. Thus while the misnomer stuck, the original name sunk to oblivion. Or almost, except that Ferdinand Marcos used "Maguindanao" to christen the new province carved out of Cotabato, a shadow of the once-sovereign Sultanate's domain.

Starting from the Spanish colonial forays into Luzon and the Visayas, Mindanao already evoked dreams of enormous increase in wealth and promotion in rank among privateers and military officers. From Sande to Corcuera to Weyler, Spanish conquistadores vied for assignment to this lucrative post. Their American successors from Leonard Wood to Tasker Bliss to John J. Pershing also saw Mindanao as a speedy vehicle for earning their stars all the way to the top US Army post. Filipino military officers later found out that a Mindanao assignment meant as much to them as it did to their colonial predecessors. And this remains true to this day.

The imagery that Mindanao stirs up is as variegated as the people who seek to understand or make others understand it.

Some private and government analysts with a global orientation suggest that Mindanao is an international flashpoint that would inevitably explode if not checked. A traditional arena of violent political and clan conflicts and a giant display window of the world's latest small firearms, it is also fast earning some distinctions worthy of international attention: a burgeoning market for narcotics and a laboratory of Islamist extremism—twin banes of George Bush's New World Order.

To religious missionaries, Christian or Muslim, Mindanao is either a bastion of "unreached peoples in dire need of the Good News" or a "community of believers threatened with Westernization, secularization and de-Islâmization." Both camps, with all their different sects, orders, or *jamaâhs* (congregations) have already put up an enormous array of evangelization and *da'wah* (Islamic call) strategies and missions.

Philanthropists, development NGOs and various government foreign aid agencies (USAID, Jica, AusAid, etc.) look at Mindanao in diverse lights. Some of them think of it as a worthy recipient of development assistance while others see it as a vulnerable conduit of their various "development" agenda.

Among some publicity-hungry politicians, Mindanao is a subject that provides an excellent opportunity for grandstanding on the floor of Congress or in front of TV cameras.

Capitalists, including international mining concerns and multinational agribusiness corporations see Mindanao as a promising investment opportunity. Oil, natural gas, gold, copper—these are only some of the resources yet to be explored or developed. Whether above or below the ground, the island's riches are enough to whet the appetite of forward-looking moneymen, negative publicity notwithstanding.

Is Mindanao a challenge to be overcome? A problem to be solved? An opportunity to be taken advantage of? A prey to be devoured? A glorious past deserving a promising future? It all depends upon who is trying to define it, as much as for whom.

To define Mindanao is first to understand everything about it: its past, present and future prospects. The 10th Minbizcon, I hope, is a positive effort in this direction.

Datu Amir Baraguir, son of the late Sultan of Maguindanao, is a former desk editor of The Mindanao Cross.

G7 in a quandary on aid for Argentina

NEWS ANALYSIS

Anna Willard

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina—Officials from the United States, Britain and Germany have all rushed to offer cash-strapped Argentina words of encouragement and support. But so far the officials have given few signals that a fresh injection of cash is right around the corner.

While private-sector analysts warn that extra funding is the only shot in the arm likely to restore investor confidence and prevent a run on Argentine banks, confusing statements from the International Monetary Fund's biggest shareholders seem to indicate that Wall Street may, at best, be in for a wait.

"It sounds like a case where they haven't made up their minds yet, so it's too early to have a G7 position," said Ted Truman, economist at Washington's Institute for International Economics and former assistant secretary for international affairs under ex-Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers.

Argentine Finance Secretary Daniel Marx said on Friday he hoped a visit by US Treasury official John Taylor would yield "reinforcements" to current loan facilities, and said he noted European "willingness...to assist us as required."

But a statement from the White House the same day was interpreted by financial markets as a signal that no new aid would necessarily be forthcoming. A spokesperson for US President George W. Bush said he believed, along with Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar and Britain's Tony Blair, that the focus should remain on the current IMF plan for Argentina which is backed by a remaining $7 billion.

The support of Germany and France was notably absent. Both countries have so far declined to comment on whether they would stump up new cash.

Other officials have provided a glimmer of hope and hinted at the chance of new aid further down the line. On Thursday, Taylor, the US Treasury undersecretary for international affairs, said before leaving for Buenos Aires that he did not rule out an expansion of the IMF program. He also said that the other options for helping the country are being discussed but that it is "hypothetical" at this point to talk about further funds.

And while its shareholders gather their thoughts, the IMF itself has said it is on stand-by to help. "We stand ready to help," said IMF spokesperson Francisco Baker even though he declined to comment specifically on whether new funds were being considered.

Baker also downplayed expectations that any help would come soon, saying a current IMF mission in Buenos Aires, slated to wrap up over the weekend, was purely to review economic performance criteria for the second quarter—targets which Argentine and other officials say they have already exceeded.

Pressed further on whether the mission might even hint about the possibility of new cash, Baker said, "I don't think you should expect anything like that from the mission."

Certainly the Bush administration, which is leading the charge to change the way the international community deals with such crises, is still feeling its way on these issues. Members of Bush's team, including Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill, favor a tougher line on doling out large funding packages, saying it is essential that they be associated only with success. But the definitions of this new tough policy are still emerging.

The United States threw its weight behind a $40-billion aid package for Argentina in December. And with a tougher policy in place it is likely to be reluctant to chuck new money after bad unless there is a guarantee that policies such as the newly approved plan to stick to a zero fiscal deficit, can truly be adhered to.

Taylor, who will likely look into this issue during his fact-finding visit, will draw up a report which may help the rest of the Bush team make up their minds.

Meanwhile, financial markets are waiting on tenterhooks for further clarification of policy. "We do need an announcement at some stage...There would be negative sentiment if on Monday we haven't had some news," said Geoffrey Dennis, Latin American equity strategist at Salomon Smith Barney. "Still, we won't fall apart."

Over the course of Friday's morning trading session, emerging debt markets lost all gains and sunk into negative territory as hopes for an imminent cash injection were dashed.

"The markets seem to expect things to move a lot faster than officials can move," said David Roberts, international economist at Bank of America. "In that sense, if that's what they are depending on, they are setting themselves up to be disappointed."

Reuters

Can't you publish more positive news?

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

THAT question has been posed to me so many times during social and formal gatherings that I have learned to anticipate it and make the appropriate response, depending on the person who asks it.

If the person is somebody I've known for years, I give a humorous reply. If the question is made in a hostile or provocative manner, my answer is guarded. I make sure I do not say anything unpleasant about the personalities who, at one time or another, may have been the subject of adverse publicity in the INQUIRER. The asking party may turn out to be a news subject himself or his PR person.

Last week, a letter from a reader reminded me of the same question. He wrote:

"I just wanted to make a comment about the editorial content of the INQUIRER. Personally, I find that there is just so much negative news. I understand and am told that negative news sells newspapers.

"But surely there must be a lot of good things out there happening to this country that the paper could highlight. I'm just concerned that so many people start their day with such negative stuff. Surely this is not healthy for their psyche and for us as a nation.

"I have personally stopped reading the INQUIRER or any other paper regularly because I don't want to start my day on a negative note. The INQUIRER obviously has a big influence because of its wide readership. It's a big responsibility for all of you. It would be great to see a positive headline even once in a while."

A letter of a similar nature, this time in connection with AM radio stations, was earlier sent to me by another reader. She complained that the morning programs of the major radio stations are a cacophony of news and commentaries about graft and corruption in government, killings, rapes, kidnappings and all kinds of imaginable crimes. By the time she steps out of the bathroom where she listens to the radio while readying herself for work, she is a nervous wreck. Her day is ruined with all the bad news and irresponsible statements of "know it all" radio commentators.

To keep her sanity, she decided to stop listening to AM stations and glued her radio dial to an FM station with good music programming and regular traffic updates. So she is able to report for work in a good mood.

But as soon as she gets to her table, she has no choice but reach for the newspaper to read the bad news she earlier avoided hearing about!

Objective reporting

The issue of whether or not the INQUIRER gives undue publicity to negative news (or stories that highlight the bad side of government and of Filipinos, in particular) has been the subject of discussion on a number of times by the editors during the regular editorial assessment meetings.

To my recollection, the most vigorous discussions on this issue came up when the newspaper published the photos of a mosque inside the camp of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front on whose turret was tied the Philippine flag; the mangled body of a 9-year-old girl who was one of the victims in the Dec. 31, 2000 bombing of the LRT trains; and the cutting of the ear of a British national who was kidnapped by a local crime syndicate.

From the exchange of views, I got the impression that the editors would love to give prominence to positive news, or stories that will show that, except for some minor bumps here and there, all's well in our country. Unfortunately, with the way things have been going in our country for the past two years or so, with man-made calamities and problems left and right, not to mention the number of times nature has been unforgiving to us, there is not enough positive stories the newspapers can use to make newspaper reading something to look forward to every day.

Whatever positive stories are available are published without delay. Somehow, the editors have managed to squeeze every day one or two uplifting or humorous stories (often with accompanying cartoons) to lighten the otherwise "heavy" news on the front page.

I agree with the editors' position that the reason for being of a newspaper is to report the news that affect the people's lives regardless of who gets hurt in the process. After all, an informed citizenry is the cornerstone of a democracy.

It cannot be helped that lately not-so-pleasant news have been hogging the front pages of the INQUIRER. That's just the state of things now in our country. The newspaper runs the risk of losing its credibility (and being accused of being in the payroll of Malacañang) if it ignores the bad news and runs stories only of "the good and the beautiful."

Out of curiosity, I checked the issues of the INQUIRER in the last three months to check for positive headlines, something that the reader said "would be great to see even once in a while."

There were four headlines that, in my view, projected a positive tone. On May 4, the headline read, "Erap thanks GMA for visit." To rabid anti-Erap groups, that headline may not have sat well, but to the public in general, I think the conciliatory gesture was most welcome.

The June 2 issue carried the headline "2 Aetas rescued missing US sailor." On July 1, the banner was "Freedom for two hostages." The most recent, July 6, the big bold letters at the top of the front page announced "Big tax cuts for firm, employees."

Is there reason to believe that positive news will one day form the bulk of the INQUIRER's pages? I am an optimist, so my answer to the question is a resounding yes. It may not come this year or next year, but sooner or later it will come.

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City." Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

THEY SAID

Opposition agenda

"My question to the opposition is this: Do they have an alternative agenda? If there is, out with it so that we can see which one could better help the people instead of talking about inconsequential matters."

—President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

Recipe for failure

"If a population management program were not included, any anti-poverty plan would surely fail."

—Akbayan party-list Rep. Etta Rosales

Heart of a champion

"It's hard to defend your title. I just played with my heart."

—Dorothy Delasin said after retaining her title in the Giant Eagle LPGA Classic

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Continuing perversion of SSS

NO TO SSS PRIVATIZATION! -KMU
NO to SSS privatization! to Lay-off! -COURAGE-
PERA NG MANGGAGAWA WAG NAKAWIN -KMU
LABANAN ANG PRIBATISASYON NG S.S.S.! -KMU
NO TO SSS

THE TURMOIL at the Social Security System has unfortunately diverted public attention from the real issues relating to the governance of that institution and the accountability of its top officials. Striking union members and some high SSS officials raised various issues against their president, Vitaliano Nañagas II, in order to demand his ouster. This is eerily reminiscent of recent attempts by Bureau of Internal Revenue personnel to have their boss removed. The heads of both these agencies have, by all accounts, been trying to institute reforms in their respective agencies, but certain parties view these efforts as inimical to their interests.

In all this, unfortunately, the issues that should matter most to the public and to SSS members were studiously skirted by those who demanded Nañagas' resignation. Unless these are directly addressed, however, it will matter little who heads the SSS and the entire affair will have turned into a governance debacle for the Macapagal administration. Those who demanded a change in leadership at the SSS should themselves answer these questions:

First, what will be done to make SSS officials accountable for past depredations? SSS officials, both past and present, were involved in questionable investments made under the previous administration. The previous SSS president himself admitted that the SSS invested in Belle Resources, Megaworld Properties, PCIBank (without the benefit of a due diligence report) and other speculative shares on the instructions of then President Estrada, contravening the standard rules of sound investment policy and against all known practice of pension fund management. The SSS acquired Belle shares at prices well above market, after which it extended a P375-million loan to the same company, having already invested P745 million in it. In 2000, 28 percent of its stock investments were still locked in 24 corporations awaiting better prices.

The trust of millions of SSS members has thus been betrayed. Regardless of how these actions are defended, the fact remains that these behest investments have now caused the SSS to be stuck with shares whose returns are far below what other investments would have yielded, in effect causing a massive loss of earning opportunities for the system and its members. In 1999, the SSS reported losses for the first time in its 44-year history and had to borrow from the Land Bank and PHIC, among others.

If something similar had occurred in the private sector, the responsible portfolio investment manager would have lost his job immediately. One looks in vain, however, for a similar mechanism at the SSS. What one finds instead is that when an investigation even threatens to correct such abuses, the perpetrators can always seek refuge behind a mob. The protesters do a disservice to SSS members when they gloss over this matter.

Second, what is to be done about the anomalously generous compensation and other packages the officers of the SSS pay themselves? These salaries, fees and benefits, which were never fully disclosed to SSS members, have been revealed to run into millions annually, even excluding the directorship fees officials collect from corporations where the SSS has investments. The public may well ask whether these expenses that constitute a drain on SSS resources actually show up in improved performance.

It is equally anomalous when civil service benefits and job security are extended to persons whose salaries are way out of line with what government pays. Congress should set the rule that those who seek government job security must be content to receive government pay. The tradeoff for an extra-high salary should be the absence of tenure and a readiness to accept the discipline of competition. As things stand in the SSS, however, incentives will always be skewed in favor of risky or questionable investments because no punishment arises even when bad judgments are made, and because any attempt by management to impose discipline is met by a resort to the Civil Service Commission and the courts.

While one is at this, it would also be a good idea if regulations were passed so that SSS employees receive benefits (housing and other loans, pensions, etc.) that are no better than what ordinary SSS members get. (Indeed, one could even make a case that they should receive no better than Government Service Insurance System benefits if they wish to be covered by the Civil Service Rules.) Doing this might at least increase the internal incentives to improve the benefits package available to ordinary members.

In the end, however, what is important is to tie a high salary (which we do not begrudge) to performance and a willingness to be evaluated by the market.

All these point to the deeper issue of the continuing perversion of the SSS. From Marcos onwards, this institution (and other government financial institutions) have been turned into sinecures for favored political appointees, a slush fund for favored outsiders and a milking cow for insiders—in a word, a bed of corruption. The picture of the SSS now is of an organization that is out of control. Forgotten is the fact that this institution is not government property but sustained by private funds from private people (employers and employees alike). Its remaining a government corporation means there is no mechanism to empower its owners to make their decisions and discipline felt, since government rules and political intervention will always prevail. Hence to oppose the "privatization" of the SSS or some of its functions is to oppose accountability to its real owners and beneficiaries: the workers. It is therefore strange that organizations that claim to represent the working class should side with those who would plunder the workers' savings.—**RAUL V. FABELLA, MA. SOCORRO GOCHOCO-BAUTISTA, EMMANUEL S. DE DIOS, EMMANUEL F. ESGUERRA, RENATO E. RESIDE JR., University of the Philippines School of Economics, Diliman, QC**

LETTERS

Sad to see a good man go

I HAVE braced myself for the consequences of writing this article. But I have to let others know that there are people in the Social Security System who are pushing for good governance.

I joined the SSS when Carlos Arellano was the president. I remember him as a man who seemed to know his way with people. He gave the employees what they wanted: generous bonuses and other fringe benefits. No wonder he was well loved. The SSS workers' union even gave him a cross-stitched portrait in appreciation for his kindness to them.

Then came Edsa II which catapulted Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo into the presidency and put Joseph Estrada behind bars. As expected, the SSS got a new chief in the person of Vitaliano Nañagas II. Everyone was wary of the new guy. Everyone was worried that he might not be as generous as Arellano.

They were right. Nañagas was very different because he went to the SSS with a vision and this scared many employees. This meant hard work and dedication would be demanded of everyone at the SSS. But what's wrong with making employees (whose salaries are three to five times more than the minimum wage) work hard for the institution's 23 million members?

I am so sad to see a good man like Nañagas leave an institution that needs his help. If the people who worked for his ouster were questioning his management style, probably, they should also look at their "working style" and ask themselves whether they have done much for the SSS members.

I salute all the men and women who did their job despite the verbal and physical harassment they received from the union members. It was not easy for these people to go to work and be called despicable names and take the flak for helping promote good governance and much better service for SSS members.

I know I am not going to stay here for long. But I want to walk away from the SSS with my head held up high. This will only happen if the reforms and plans initiated by Nañagas will be continued. I leave that to the incoming president who happens to be as brilliant as her predecessor.—**MABEL OBISO, 26-A Mabait St., Teacher's Village, Diliman, Quezon City**

Olongapo keeps Gordons in office

I DID not know that the Gordons have ruled Olongapo for 40 years. I do know that the Gordons worked for and worked with the people of Olongapo for 40 years.

I did not know that Olongapo continues to endure the Gordons. I do know that Olongapo continues to love the Gordons.

I did not know that the Gordons would not let others take over. I do know that it is the people of Olongapo through the might of their votes who won't let others take over.

I do not believe the Gordons are typical *trapos* (traditional politicians). I do believe they are mere *trapos* (*trabaho tinatapos*).

Fr. Robert Reyes' run last March 21, 2001 from Subic to Olongapo was not a march to the streets to express a desire for change. It was a political march to show his dislike and disapproval of Richard Gordon.

To me, change should be for the better. If Father Reyes desires change, he should write to the elected councilors of Olongapo and feed them with ideas. He can even join them during their regular sessions.

But if he thinks he can personally do the changes, why doesn't he leave the pastoral arena and shift to the political arena? He might be more effective as a politician than as a running priest.

However, I think he would be doing more for God if he stayed in the pulpit. He should stop running as a priest and start being a priest.

Olongapo was never a haven for prostitution and child sex during the time of Richard Gordon. So, where did he get this information? Was it from another priest?

No one should wait for the Gordons to exit. The waiting will be futile. The Gordons will never leave Olongapo alone. The people of Olongapo will never want it. Why? Because the Gordons really care.

One final word to Father Reyes: Stop hating Richard Gordon. It is bad for a priest to hate.—**ROMEO S. ISON, Sta. Rita, Olongapo City**

Criticisms grounded on baseless premises

WHEN the big guns of the INQUIRER, including the respected columnist Amando Doronila, trained their sights on me as they have done in the past several days, it made me feel like I have committed an unspeakable offense. But since I have replied to the INQUIRER's editorial diatribes against me, allow me to focus on Doronila's offensive.

With due respect, his conclusions denigrating my person may sound plausible but only if one disregards his absolutely baseless premises.

First, I did not "stage the (Guns of August) offensive based on hearsay." The "Guns of August" was simply Sen. Blas Ople's colorful way of categorizing the exposés on the venalities associated with the Macapagal administration that the Senate opposition planned to unleash in the month of August. I was assigned to initiate a formal Senate investigation on Bing Rodrigo's accusation against Mike Arroyo. But as the newspaper, radio and television accounts will show, my position has always been that unless there was a solid basis for doing so, I would not even file a resolution to start any investigation. I have stuck to that position up to this writing. There is, thus, no basis for Doronila's conclusion that I wanted "to replicate the exposé of" Chavit Singson and cause the downfall of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo even if the accusation of Rodrigo had no factual foundation.

Second, his interpretation of my role as a "bridge" between the Estrada and Macapagal camps during the impeachment trial of Estrada was also totally misplaced. What I mainly tried to convey to Cory Aquino, Jaime Cardinal Sin and Archbishop Quevedo last Jan. 20 was the possibility of having Estrada resign and his getting out of the country precisely to forestall his becoming a focal point of dissension.

Third, neither was Doronila correct when he wrote that the opposition had no alternative to the State of the Nation Address proposals of President Macapagal. Sen. Edgardo Angara has defined the main outlines of such an alternative. And if I mentioned the proliferation of *jueteng* in Pampanga, it was only to stress the need for the President to crack down hard on *jueteng* in her own home province. If she did that, she would prove her sincerity in stamping out the illegal numbers game that, among other things, triggered the downfall of Estrada, and might cause serious problems for her too.

Fourth, in trying to drive a wedge between me and the other members of the opposition, Doronila showed his bias for the agenda of the administration: to emasculate and divide the minority so that the Macapagal administration can do what it wants without being called to account by the Senate opposition.

I have been told that it is useless to argue against columnists because they will always have the last say and there is no certainty that what their targets say in response will ever find print in the newspapers that carry their columns. I am hoping against hope, though, that there is room for honest disagreement in this country and that the INQUIRER will find it fit to print my side.—**SEN. AQUILINO Q. PIMENTEL JR., Senate minority leader, 6th Floor, Senate of the Philippines, GSIS Bldg., Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City**

Principle over popularity

IF the capital crime of plunder could spell death for former President Joseph Estrada, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's plan to commute her predecessor's death sentence could spell disaster for her 2004 presidential bid like what happened to US President Gerald Ford.

The apprehension expressed by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines' National Secretariat for Social Action, Justice and Peace that her decision favoring Erap's house arrest could be a prelude to the grant of presidential pardon is now being proven correct. The President, in an interview, categorically stated that she would not grant pardon to Erap if ever the latter were convicted of the capital crime of plunder. However, her slip showed when she followed it up with the statement that she would maybe commute the death sentence to life imprisonment.

In 1974, Ford pardoned his predecessor, Richard Nixon, who was involved in the Watergate scandal. That act cost him the presidency in the 1976 elections.

However, last May 21, the JFK Library gave Ford its Profiles in Courage Award for proving that "politics can be a noble profession" with his "controversial decision of conscience."

Some of the President's allies criticized her plan to commute Erap's sentence. But she seems to be unmindful of the consequences because she believes what our dying country needs right now is reconciliation and it is part of the healing process. It is easy to go with what is popular but it takes moral courage to fight for one's conviction and principle and go against public opinion.

As Ford said: "Courage is not something to be gauged in a poll or located in a focus group. No adviser can spit it. No historian can backdate it. For, in the age-old contest between popularity and principle, only those willing to lose for their convictions are deserving of posterity's approval."—**EMMANUEL MAPILI, lawyer, House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal, Commonwealth Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City**

No plan to legalize 'colorum' buses

MAY I take exception to Neal Cruz's column last Aug. 2, titled "Colorum buses to be legalized." He wrote that "the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board has been reported to be planning to legitimize the hordes of colorum jeepneys and buses" with the excuse that 'they cannot be stopped anyway.'"

The LTFRB and its chair welcome criticism, even caustic criticism, based on facts and correct reports. On the basis of facts and correct reports, we deserve to be judged, even reprimanded especially by respected and credible columnists.

However, allow me to categorically state that the LTFRB is not planning to legalize *colorum* buses and jeepneys. The truth of the matter is that this has not even been formally discussed in the Department of Transportation and Communications which is the government's policymaking body for the country's transportation industry. The present policy calls for the apprehension and impoundment of *colorum* buses and jeepneys. Because the LTFRB has no law enforcement authority and personnel, the Land Transportation Office and the Metro Manila Development Authority have been given these tasks. But I have gone on record to push for the apprehension of *colorum* buses and jeepneys since they have no franchise or authority to operate.

Various transport groups have been requesting the DOTC and the LTFRB to legalize *colorum* and "out-of-line" transport operations. In response to requests, we have studied the routes to determine whether there is need to allow the operation of public utility vehicles there. Once the need is established, applications for franchise are accepted. *Colorum* operators are allowed to apply, provided they meet the qualifications prescribed by law for public service operators.

With respect to *colorum* FX taxicabs, there is a clamor to legalize their operations, but that is for the DOTC to decide as it is the policymaking body on land transportation. However, public hearings and consultations should be held so that all those who want to give their position on the matter will be heard.

Surely we wouldn't be asking too much if we request that the LTFRB be given the opportunity to explain before it is criticized. I will be happy to answer honestly any questions or inquiries pertaining to the LTFRB and my conduct, official or personal.—**DANTE M. LANTIN, chair, Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board, East Avenue, Quezon City**

Old-fashioned red baiting

THE STATEMENT of former Isabela Rep. Rodolfo Albano that the seven party-list groups, which passed the qualifications set by the Supreme Court, are leftists is pure red scare, an old-fashioned tactic of the elite to isolate those who represent the voice of the marginalized.

Why blame the so-called radicals if they really are the ones left fighting for the underrepresented sectors of society? Is it because he is a party-list nominee of the disqualified Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC)?

A party-list system for the marginalized is, indeed, necessary as exemplified by this act of someone who already had a taste of power.—**VICTOR V. MORILLO JR., public information officer, Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Manggagawang Pilipino, 47 Masikap St., Barangay Pinyahan, Diliman, Quezon City**

Too much politics in the Senate

POLITICS is rearing its ugly head again in the halls of the Senate. It may take a while before the Senate can buckle down to legislative business because its members, or at least majority of them, are embroiled in power play. This is Philippine politics at its finest.

The patience of Juan de la Cruz is wearing thin. We have heard and seen enough of politics. It's high time our legislators focused their efforts on doing their job knowing they are being paid with taxpayers' money.

We do not care who's the Senate president or who chairs what. What people want to see is a Senate at work without the endless bickering, grandstanding, credit-grabbing and what have you. Neither do we want to see legislators boasting about their accomplishments because they're mandated to do those things.

Speaking of legislation, I wonder how many millions were spent to enact a law that is as basic and simple as the one mandating the use of seatbelts and how many so-called "landmark" measures have actually improved the lot of marginalized Filipinos.

Will somebody tell our legislators not to trivialize their position by engaging in endless debates which make Juan de la Cruz shriek in dismay?—**JUN AGUILAR, Marikina City**

The WORLD

LUVERNE B. GUECO, EDITOR

NORTH Korean Leader Kim Jong-il (left) talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin during their meeting in the Kremlin Aug. 4. REUTERS

Kim: N. Korea no rogue

MOSCOW—North Korean Leader Kim Jong-il insisted Saturday that his country's missile program was "peaceful," in a move designed to strengthen Moscow's hand in opposing a US missile defense shield.

In a joint statement with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Kim reaffirmed his support for the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty as the basis for strategic security. A Kremlin official said the North Korean leader confirmed a self-imposed moratorium on missile-testing until 2003.

"The Korean side assured that North Korea's missile program has a peaceful nature and correspondingly does not pose a threat to any country that respects North Korea's sovereignty," the two leaders said in the statement reported by Moscow news agencies.

The statement described the ABM treaty as a "cornerstone of strategic stability and the basis for further reductions in strategic offensive weapons."

The statement was cast specifically to counter US arguments that a missile shield is necessary to defend against "rogue" states of the kind North Korea is said to represent.

Separately, the deputy head of the presidential administration, Sergei Prikhodko, said Kim "confirmed his country intends to observe the moratorium on missile testing until 2003," Interfax said.

The US plan is opposed by Moscow on the grounds that it effectively abrogates the ABM treaty, and has been greeted with reservations by several of Washington's allies.

The declaration, which included a series of accords on economic cooperation, has been seen as a propaganda coup for Putin, who is aiming to show that Russia can decisively influence its isolated neighbor in the Far East.

The statement was an elaborate package of trade-offs in which Russia balanced inducements to Pyongyang against a reluctance to offend North Korean arch-rival South Korea.

Moscow expressed "understanding" of Pyongyang's latest call for the United States to withdraw its 37,000 troops from the peninsula.

It stressed the need to ensure "peace and stability on the Korean peninsula using peaceful means" and said it was ready to "play a constructive and responsible role" to help achieve a settlement between the two Koreas.

Prikhodko said the two leaders did not discuss military cooperation "in detail," though the issue was likely to be raised at expert level subsequently.

Kim's shopping list for his Moscow visit was believed to include ground to-air S-300 missiles, but analysts said it was unlikely that Putin would agree to offer these to North Korea for fear of offending not just Seoul but also the United States. *AFP*

Russia slams US extension of sanctions on Iran, Libya

MOSCOW—Moscow "deplored" the US decision to extend for five years a 1996 sanctions act curbing foreign investment in the petroleum and gas industries of Iran and Libya, foreign ministry sources were quoted by the Interfax news agency as saying.

"This is a mistake which may bring more difficulties to the life of the international community and to Russo-US relations in particular," the sources said late Saturday.

"The United States are once again trying to impose their internal laws upon the outside world and put pressure on other countries under an invented pretext," the sources added.

Washington considers both Iran and Libya to be supporters of international terrorism and the development of weapons of mass destruction.

The sanctions allow the US government to penalize foreign businesses with more than $20 million invested annually in either Iran's or Libya's energy sector.

"Moscow has cooperated and will continue cooperating with Tripoli and Tehran," the sources affirmed, adding that "Russia has its own economic interests in those states and pursuing them cannot damage any third party."

Washington broke off relations with Iran in 1980 after a hostage crisis at the US Embassy in Tehran, and imposed an oil embargo on the country in 1995.

Diplomatic relations with Tripoli are also frozen amid US contentions that Libya has not yet taken full responsibility for the 1988 bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland that killed 270 people nor has it adequately compensated the families of victims. *AFP*

Southeast Asia prospects seen as very bleak

SINGAPORE—With the recovery of the US economy looking further and further away, economists say the prospects for export-driven Southeast Asian economies have dimmed in tandem.

The United States, a top export destination for the region, has been an anchor of growth for Asian countries, especially those dependent on electronics exports such as Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines.

But the US economy grew just 0.7 percent in the second quarter, its weakest showing in eight years, and until the United States picks up, the picture for the region is not going to look pretty, economists say.

"The key thing is, when is the US economy expected to bottom out," said Gerard Teo, a regional strategist at Dutch bank ABN Amro.

"The general feeling is that with interest rate cuts (by the Federal Reserve) and tax rebates, this should bottom out by the end of the year but one has to be slightly less optimistic at this point," he said.

"It doesn't appear that we have hit bottom yet."

Rebecca Patterson, a currency strategist at JP Morgan Chase and Co. sees more dark clouds on the US horizon.

"The hopes that the US would bottom out in the third quarter are called into question now," she said.

"Our expectations are that we will have some disappointing news on the US front for the third quarter."

This will not augur well for Southeast Asia because new orders from the United States for electronics goods will not come streaming in while existing inventories remained uncleared.

"In a nutshell, the outlook remains extremely bleak," said Desmond Supple, head of research at Barclays Capital.

"We see no signs of the overhang of the US electronic sector being worked out anytime soon."

In its latest quarterly economic review, SG Securities has revised downwards its 2001 growth forecast for Southeast Asian countries.

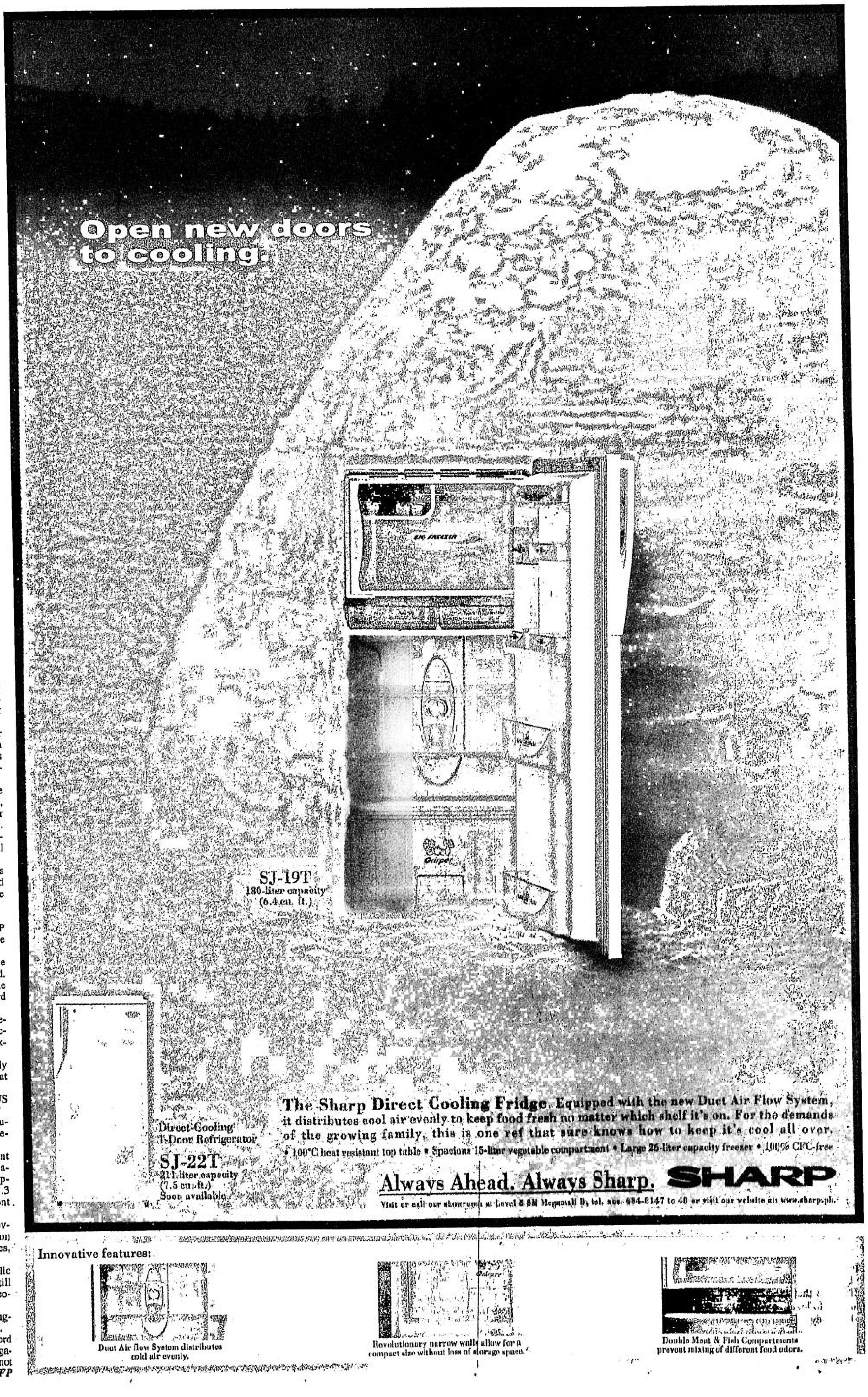
It projected Indonesia would grow 2.9 percent this year from a previous forecast of 4 percent, Malaysia at 0.7 percent from 6.2 percent, the Philippines at 2.1 percent from 3 percent, Singapore at 1.3 percent from 6.7 percent, and Thailand at 2 percent from 3.7 percent.

Unfortunately for the region, there was little governments could do to reverse the bleak situation apart from the usual fiscal pump priming measures, economists say.

Even then, the benefits from an increase in public spending are limited because most countries still faced the arduous task of completing structural economic reforms.

"Fiscal priming has a limit because they are struggling with restructuring," said Teo at ABN Amro.

Even Singapore, which has a better fiscal record than its neighbors, admits its recent 2.2-billion Singapore dollar ($1.2 billion) stimulus package will not fully shield the city-state from the US downturn. *AFP*



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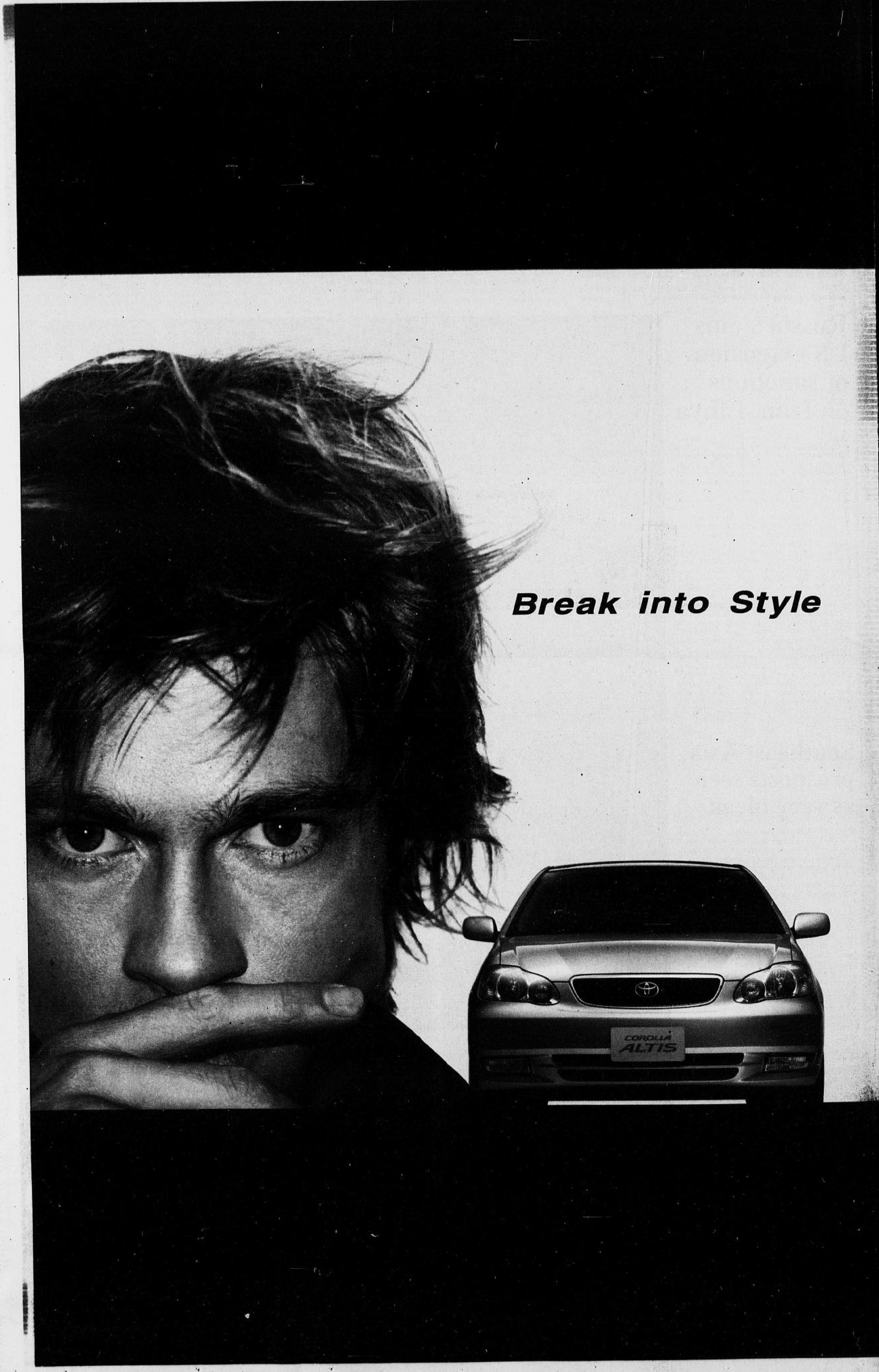
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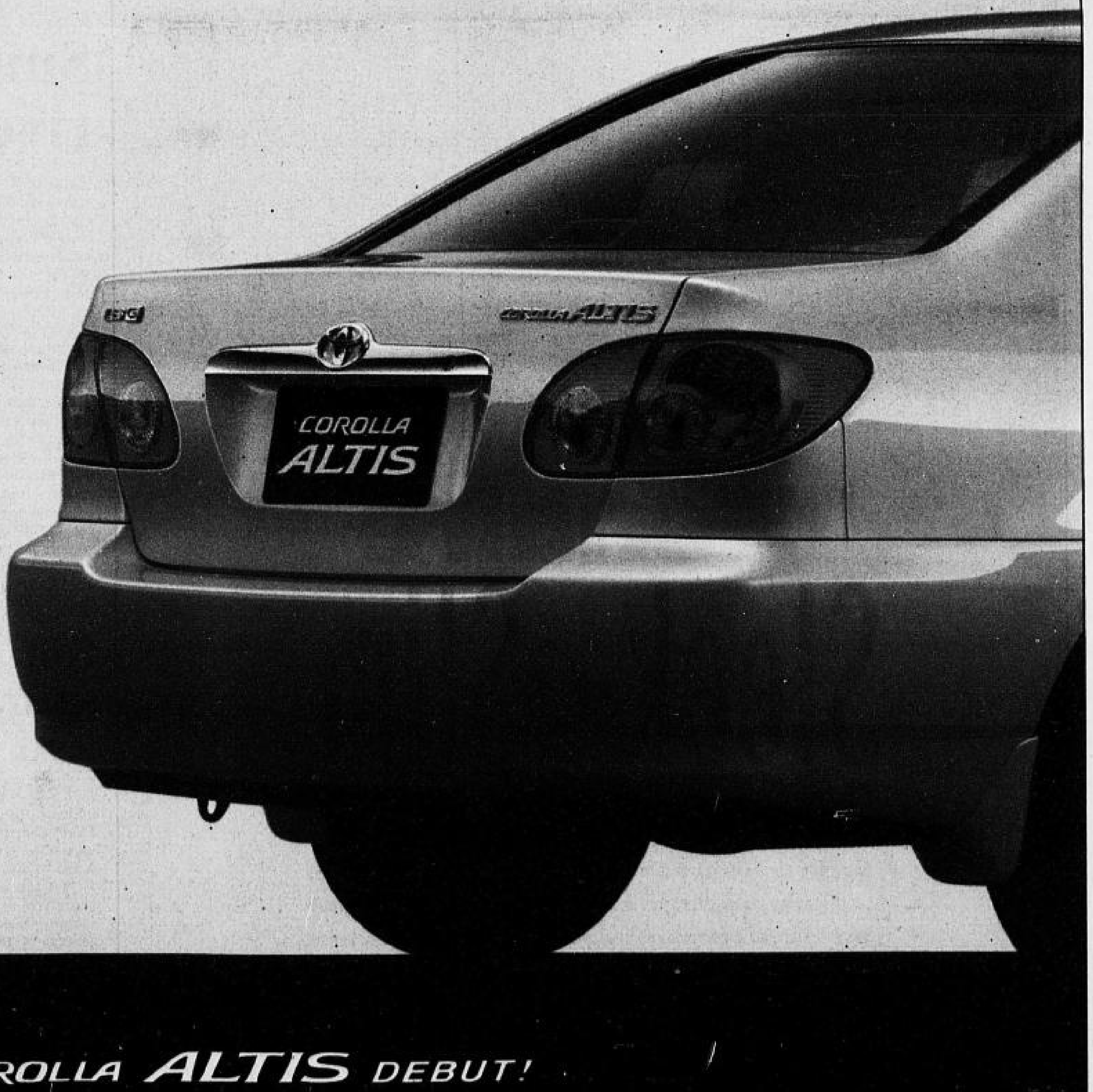
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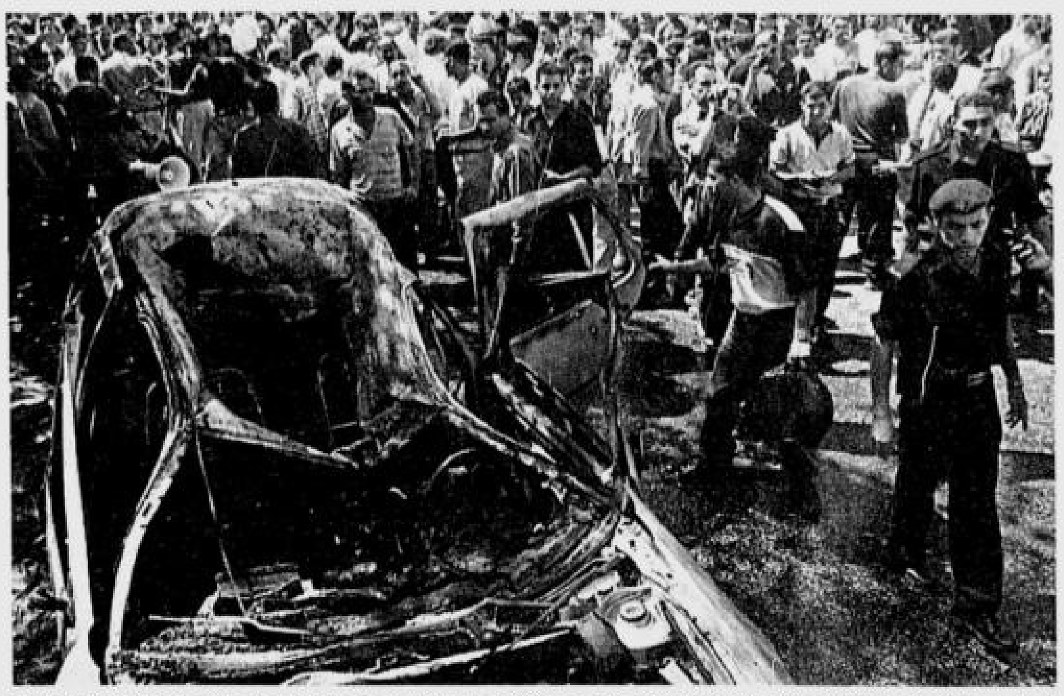


PALESTINIANS gather around a destroyed car hit in an Israeli attack in the West Bank city of Ramallah Aug. 4. Israel launched at least two missiles at a convoy of cars carrying senior Fatah member Marwan Barghouthi, but did not hit his vehicle. REUTERS

Botched Israeli missile strike spurs gun battles

JERUSALEM—Gun battles raged on Saturday night on Jerusalem's outskirts and across the West Bank after a botched Israel missile strike against Palestinian activists intensified the wrath of Palestinians revolting against Israeli occupation. In some of the heaviest fighting in months, gunfire on the outskirts of Jerusalem echoed through the Holy City after Palestinian gunmen opened fire at Israeli apartment buildings, drawing a heavy Israeli response.

Tracer bullets sliced through the night sky and the sounds of explosions and the distant rattle of Israeli machinegun fire reverberated through central Jerusalem.

The ground occasionally shook as a tank shell landed in a Palestinian area nearby.

As the Saturday night firefight raged at Gilo, a Jewish settlement that Israel regards as a neighborhood of Jerusalem, fighting spread to other parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

At least 510 Palestinians, 130 Israelis and 13 Israeli Arabs have been killed since the Palestinian uprising began over 10 months ago.

Senior West Bank Fatah leader Marwan Barghouthi, an influential figure in the uprising, said he was the target of the Israeli missile strike which hit two cars near his office outside Ramallah but not his vehicle.

"This is a failed assassination attempt," Barghouthi told Reuters. "The criminal occupiers will pay for this new crime."

Israeli military and political sources denied that Barghouthi was the target. Security officials said the missiles were intended for Barghouthi's wounded aide, whose car suffered a direct hit.

Police said 14 apartment buildings in Gilo and two cars were hit by Palestinian bullets and an Israeli woman received a very light face wound.

A Palestinian father, whose house was damaged by Israeli tank fire, said his 10 children were hurt from glass fragments. Palestinians in the town of Beit Jala, which is often used by gunmen to fire on Gilo, said a house was damaged by tank fire.

The fighting late on Saturday spread to the nearby Bethlehem area where the army reported heavy fire at Israeli soldiers guarding a bypass road around the West Bank town, as well as several Jewish settlements and a religious shrine nearby. *Reuters*

Smugglers using US' dirtiest river to bring in Mexicans

CALEXICO, California—The Rio Nuevo, a sluggish river meandering from Mexico to California, may not be popular with local residents, but smugglers of illegal Mexican migrants to the United States see its benefits.

The New River, as it is known in the United States, runs from Mexicali in northwest Mexico to California's Imperial Valley, throwing up foam from a toxic mix of pesticides, sewage waste and chemicals that run into its waters from Mexican manufacturing complexes.

The deadly cocktail keep US border patrols away from the water, making it a popular crossing point used by the "polleros"—people traffickers—to send over illegal migrants.

Traffickers are well aware that police try not to enter the New River's waters because of the high level of contaminants in the river, says police spokesperson Arturo Sandoval.

"That's why the traffickers tell the migrants to get into the river and to stay there until they have gone as far as they can," Sandoval explains.

The river has been classed for three decades by the Environment Protection Agency as the United States' most polluted river.

According to a new study by Imperial County's Irrigation Department, bacteria that provoke "hepatitis, typhoid, cholera, various types of cancer and polio," have been found in the river.

Dozens of people smuggled daily into the United States face sickness as a result of swallowing the water, with non-swimmers in danger of drowning.

"But the migrants don't know that, only the guides and the traffickers, but they don't ask them if they can swim before telling them to get into the river," says Mexican consul in Calexico, Rita Vargas.

Migrants have been known to stay in the water for up to 95 kilometers north of the US border where the New River feeds into the Salton Sea for treatment.

Vargas blames the drowning deaths of five people in the river in July on the smugglers. She says the only solution is to stop the migrants before they get into the river.

They wait for guides to pick them up and drop them in cities such as Los Angeles, San Diego or Riverside, adds Vargas. "Some of them fall by the wayside, can't swim or the river waters make them ill," she says. *AFP*

Koizumi war shrine visit a go, says aide

TOKYO—Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi is expected to visit a controversial Tokyo war shrine despite fierce protests from neighboring Asian countries, an aide said Sunday.

"I think he will certainly make a pilgrimage to Yasukuni and I think he should," Taku Yamasaki, secretary general of the Koizumi-led Liberal Democratic Party, told a debate on the private Fuji television network.

Koizumi has vowed to visit the Yasukuni shrine, dedicated to those who died in a century of conflicts, on Aug. 15—the 56th anniversary of Japan's surrender to the US-led allied forces in World War II.

Gen. Hideki Tojo and other Japanese World War II leaders, who were convicted as war criminals, are also honored at the Shinto shrine.

Yamasaki admitted the visit would sour relations with China, South Korea and other Asian countries invaded by Japan.

China as well as North and South Korea have strongly denounced the proposed visit, which they argue would justify Japan's military past.

It comes amid anger by the same countries about school history textbooks approved for usage by Tokyo which are accused of whitewashing Japan's wartime record.

Yamasaki said that in a bid to lessen diplomatic confrontation as much as possible, the premier could issue a statement regarding his pilgrimage, explaining his view of history. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

No fresh US aid to Argentina

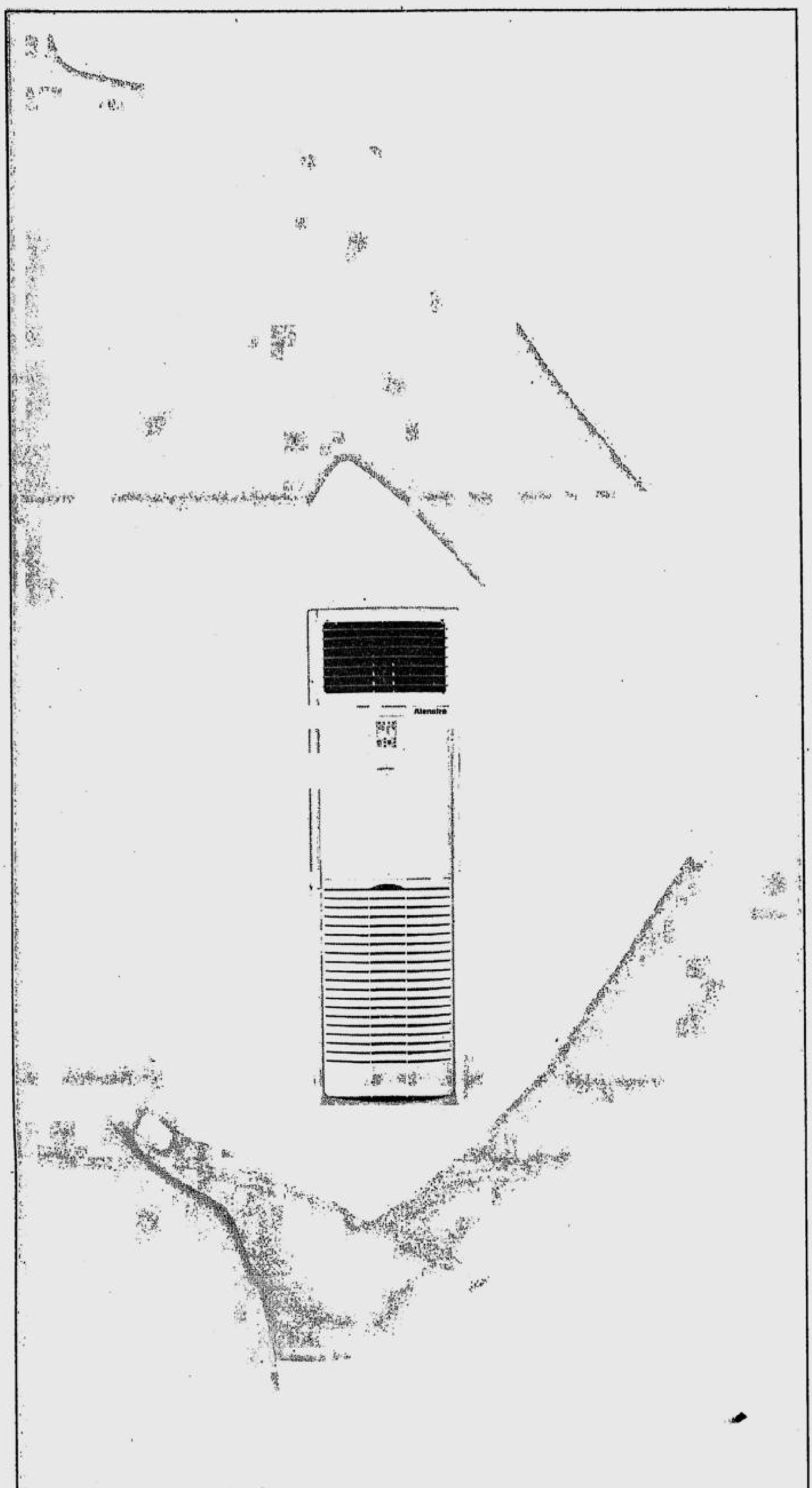
BUENOS AIRES, Argentina—US Treasury official John Taylor closed his visit to Argentina on Saturday saying he was "impressed" with the government's efforts to pull out of crisis, but there was no sign of fresh US financial aid for the struggling economy. After "fruitful and detailed" talks with top government officials on Saturday and meetings with local businessmen and economists, the Treasury Undersecretary for International Affairs praised the government's steps to erase its budget deficit and spur growth. But the notable absence of any reference to new cash to help the government fend off fears of a debt default confirmed fears voiced by markets on Friday, who despite initial hopes had suspected the talks would result in simply verbal support. *Reuters*

Solo balloon flight begins

NORTHAM, Australia—US adventurer Steve Fossett on Sunday launched his balloon from the Western Australian desert in another attempt to become the first to fly a balloon solo around the world. The giant high-altitude balloon, bathed in the desert's golden morning light, drifted slowly into the sky above Northam, a small mining town 100 kilometers east of Perth, just after 7 a.m. Fossett's fourth solo bid ended in near disaster in 1998, when a thunderstorm off Australia's northeastern coast shredded his canopy and sent him plummeting 9,000 meters into the Coral Sea. He was unhurt. *Reuters*

Fujimori defends self

LIMA—Peru's former president Alberto Fujimori was back on the Internet this weekend to counter moves by the Peruvian authorities to extradite him from Japan to face corruption charges. From self-imposed exile in the land of his forebears, Fujimori argued through postings on his website that, far from being guilty of dereliction of duty, he delivered on "the duty to bring hyperinflation under control," and "the duty to defeat terrorism." A judge in Lima Thursday issued an international warrant for the former ruler, for failing to appear in a Peruvian court to respond to charges of having abandoned the post of president. *AFP*



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Italian scientist plans first mass human clone trial

LONDON—A controversial Italian embryologist is preparing to impregnate up to 200 women with cloned embryos in the world's first attempt to produce a human clone, The Sunday Times reported.

Professor Severino Antinori is set to tell the National Academy of Sciences at a conference in Washington on Thursday that he expects to start his cloning program in November, the paper said.

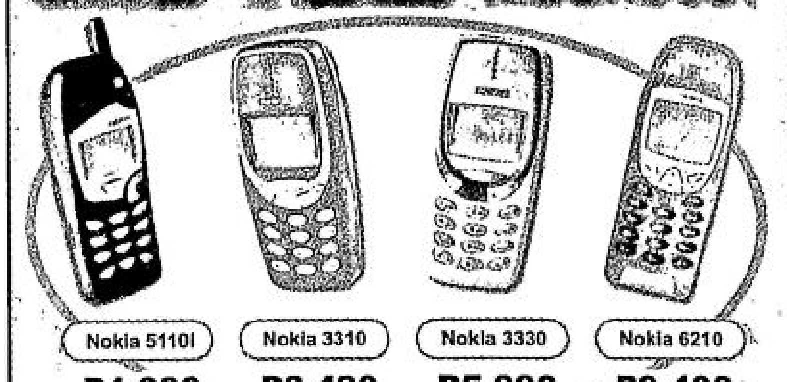
The move will reignite a debate about the ethics and safety of cloning as an infertility treatment.

Antinori, whose clinic in Rome enabled a 62-year-old woman to have a baby in 1994, said that up to 200 couples from several countries, including eight from Britain, were being selected for the cloning project and would be treated free of charge, according to The Sunday Times.

Antinori said the men in most of the couples under consideration were infertile. "They have no natural way of becoming fathers," he was quoted as saying in the broadsheet.

The Sunday Times reported that he intended to use a technique which involved taking a nucleus from a cell belonging to the man which is inserted into a woman's egg cell, from which the nucleus has been removed. The embryo is then implanted in her womb.

Antinori acknowledged that international hostility to cloning meant that he could be forced to work in a remote country, or even on a ship in international waters. *AFP*



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Queen Mother marks 101th birthday

LONDON—The Queen Mother Elizabeth, her spirits undimmed by recent illness, chatted happily Saturday with many of the thousands of admirers who gathered to celebrate her 101st birthday.

Young and old, Londoners, country people and suburbanites, they lined up—sometimes 10 deep—along the road to the Queen Mother's Clarence House residence and overflowed along the broad Mall that leads to Buckingham Palace.

QUEEN MOTHER

Many stood for hours to get a glimpse of the mother of Queen Elizabeth II, and she didn't disappoint them.

When she went to a central London hospital Wednesday for a blood transfusion to treat anemia, the Queen Mother had made clear she meant to be home in time for this birthday treat.

Very small and frail in a pale turquoise coat and wide-brimmed hat, she emerged from the gates of her house shortly after 11 a.m. to a roar of applause. Troops marched past for a military salute, and a scarlet-coated brass band played a chorus of "Happy Birthday."

Hovering staff placed a chair behind the Queen Mother, but except for one brief sit-down when she seemed to lose her balance, she ignored it.

While two plump corgi dogs wandered around her feet, she stood to talk with each of the dozen or so children who brought flowers, cards and balloons.

The Queen Mother then climbed without assistance into a golf cart festooned with birthday balloons and made a slow tour of the crowd, accepting more flowers and good wishes.

This eagerness to chat with people and the obvious pleasure she takes from each meeting are part of the famous charm that so few can resist.

The rest of the royal family soon began to gather for lunch, including 52-year-old grandson Prince Charles, also freshly out of the hospital following a fall from his horse during a polo match Friday.

Devoted fan Terry Hutt, 67, who had waited two days for his chance to talk with the Queen Mother, said every minute of the 48 hours was worth it.

"When she recognized who I was she held my hand," Hutt said, who never misses a chance to meet the Queen Mother. "I told her to keep well and look after herself . . . and she said to me, 'I'm feeling much better'." *AP*

Protesters stall Vieques bomb exercises

VIEQUES, Puerto Rico—Carrying signs reading "Navy Out!" fishermen and protesters in nine speedboats invaded restricted waters off of Vieques Island Saturday, stalling US Navy bombing exercises that have drawn the criticism of residents and politicians.

Reporters watched from a boat outside of restricted waters as the speedboats raced toward the Navy's firing range, passing within 150 meters of several amphibious personnel carriers that were shuttling equipment and marines to a beach in preparation for mock invasion exercises. Two warships were about 5 kilometers away.

Although security ships chased the boats out of the restricted waters, the fishermen managed to pull up to the range and drop a group of protesters off, three of whom were detained by authorities.

The boat chase stalled ship-to-shore shelling for about three hours.

Anti-Navy activists said at least 19 people were hiding on the range but Navy spokeswoman Lt. Cmdr. Katherine Goode said the Navy was "confident the range was clear" and that exercises had resumed.

"They are continually putting the lives of protesters at risk," said Robert Rabin, an anti-Navy activist. "They have been lucky and we have been lucky that no one has gotten killed."

Since this round of exercises began Thursday, at least 28 people have been detained for allegedly trespassing on federal property.

"This is a war that we have had with them for 60 years," said Jose Garcia, a 39-year-old fisherman. "My grandfather, father and my uncle all fought the same war and the Navy hasn't been able to put us down. The fishermen are the biggest headaches that they have."

The fishermen, who say the waters around the bombing range are rich with conch, lobster and red snapper, are prohibited from fishing in the restricted areas during the Navy exercises. Fishing is among the most important sources of income on Vieques.

The Navy recently announced a program of compensation that would pay fishermen $100 for each day that bombing exercises prevent them working, and grants of up to $25,000 to start small businesses.

But some say it's not enough.

"This is to make them know that this island and these waters are ours," said Carlos Maldonado, a 25-year-old fisherman, before he joined Saturday's protests. "They have to leave." *AP*

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"ROTC – A National Security Issue NOT an Ailment"

We, the members of the National ROTC Alumni Association (NARAA), strongly object to the University Belt Consortium's published paid statements appealing to all colleges and universities to join them in their so-called "crusade to eradicate a rolling system and excise a cancer that gnaws on the lives of the young and the innocent". This call, they entitled, "The ROTC—Excising a Cancer".

This radical call has been followed by individual letters to the editor and even some editorial comments voicing similar sentiments. Lately, there have been walkouts from ROTC training grounds, all calling for the abolition of an institution that has served our country and our people well through several generations, a World War, and several counter-insurgency campaigns.

It is, perhaps time that the NARAA speaks out its mind on this issue. The NARAA which represents 75 to 80 percent of the AFP, PNP and Coast Guard Officer Corps strongly objects to the abolition of the ROTC program in much the same way that it decries the irresponsible and insulting paid statements by the University Belt Consortium comparing the ROTC to a malignant medical ailment, a cancer no less.

The NARAA states for the record that the relevance of the ROTC program to our national life is a matter of National Security, definitely not a medical problem.

The NARAA would also like to state for the record that we do not and will not condone the brutal ritual of hazing in our educational system which includes our military and police training institutions like the PMA, the PAF Flying School and the PNP Academy, in the same manner that the NARAA calls for the swift dealing of justice to the perpetrators of the brutal and dastardly act which caused Mark Chua's death.

The NARAA extols Mark Chua's act of reporting the anomalies in the ROTC system. This idealism is the kind that we should encourage among our youth especially among ROTC cadets.

The NARAA calls for a wide-ranging review and reformation of the ROTC system with the end in view of strengthening it as a very necessary subset of our national security infrastructure. It is the only course or subject in college that serves to instill the values of discipline, strength of character, teamwork and patriotism among our youth. School administrators should not default on this shared responsibility with the Department of National Defense. Otherwise other really malignant sectors of our society will step in and take over our youth.

NARAA strongly believes that the ROTC program is still very much relevant in addressing our national security concerns. Let there be a national debate on the changing aspects of National Security as we enter the next millennium with the end in view of reforming and retooling our national security institutions, to include the ROTC, so that the Filipino people will be enabled to face the daunting national security challenges of today and of the future. After all, national security is rightfully the concern of ALL Filipinos.

LTGEN WILLIAM K HOTCHKISS III AFP (Ret)
National Chairman, NARAA

CAPT PANFILO V VILLARUEL (Ret)
National President, NARAA

AN APPEAL TO OUR NATIONAL LEADERS
IF WE LOVE OUR COUNTRY
LET US SAVE THE ROTC PROGRAM

"The defense of the State is the prime duty of the government and the people, and, in the fulfillment of this duty, all citizens may be required by law to render personal military or civil service."

The first law that was passed by the Commonwealth Government of the Philippines was the National Defense Act (NDA) in 1935. Since then there were several amendments improving its provisions until a major amendment was passed on 27 June 1991—the Republic Act No. 7077, otherwise known as the AFP Reservist Act. This major amendment makes ROTC relevant to the present needs of the government. The graduates of the ROTC program, the young reservists, are classified as the ready reserve which can be utilized not only to augment the active force for security but can also provide service support to the government development programs.

The NDA has two (2) major programs on manpower development for the AFP Reserve Force. The Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) in the educational institutions and the 20-year old Trainee Program now called the Basic Citizen Military Training (BCMT) Program for out-of-school youth and non-ROTC takers. The BCMT or trainee program is the six (6) months compulsory training in military camps in lieu of ROTC. Under Sec 14, RA 7077, all male citizens between 18-25 years, who are not reservists, shall be required to register for military instructions.

ROTC graduates have served this nation well, especially in the last World War and during the Counter-Insurgency and the Mindanao Campaigns. It is the major source and cheapest manpower development program in building up a strong reserve force. Today, ROTC is the only mandatory citizenship, disciplinary and leadership training in Educational Institutions that seeks to develop the youth into better and useful citizens of the Republic.

If we love our country because it is the only one GOD has given us, let us save the ROTC program. It is an accepted program in schools and it has a glorious and magnificent history. Our National Leaders should not make a hasty decision in abolishing the ROTC Program. Remember first the future of the Philippines.

"If a man has a headache, the doctor does not cut off his head. He just applies the proper medical treatment to cure the ache"

REYNALDO G SANTOS
President Reserve Officers Legions (ROLP)

MARIANO M GANZON
National Commander, AFPNRA

OTHER STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT TO THE ROTC PROGRAM

". . . There are those who want to improve or modify the program while there are those who even want to scrap the program altogether. Whatever motives they may have, they should be made to realize that the 'Wisdom' in the ROTC Program lies in the fact that the total personality transformed through ROTC (Discipline—Leadership—Citizenship) training, intertwined with an academic undertaking (for College Degree) is analogous to the tempering of the metal into a desired state of hardness and sharpness of a sword."

MR. FLORENTINO D. DIANA
President, Dipolog City Institute of Technology

"The Mindanao State University System (MSUS) is proposing the retention of the ROTC Program in all its curriculum offerings for the following reasons, among others:
- *It develops student leadership ability;*
- *Inculcates the value of patriotism and nationalism among students; and*
- *It contributes to community development."*

DR. CAMAR A. UMPA Ph.D.
President, Mindanao State University

" ROTC training is not all militarism, but more a training on discipline, leadership and citizenship which results in a combination of civil duty and service to the Flag which is vital to the survival and growth of the Filipino as a nation. . . "

ATTY. ALBERTO P. CONCHA
President, Dipolog Medical Center College Foundation Inc.

AN APPEAL FROM THE ASSOCIATION OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (APSCU)—REGION 1

By and large, ROTC has served the educational objectives and goals for which the program has now become, by law, a requirement in the College curriculum. Consider the following points and issues, as follows:

1. Graduates of the ROTC Program are qualified to become officers in the AFP during times of national crisis such as invasion or war, or to provide personnel for national mobilization to meet serious national disasters and calamities as the government sees fit.
2. The ROTC program directly teaches students basic military training and skills such as obeying orders of superiors officers, patriotism, love of country, chain of command concepts, including concepts of insubordination, military drills and ceremonies, organization, respect for the flag, respect for authorities, love of country, familiarization with basic military equipment and procedures and many other details too numerous to mention.
3. The ROTC Program has widened its scope of curricular subject matter to include civic and community concerns.
4. The ROTC Program helps institute concepts and expressions of enforcing discipline among the young, self-sacrifice, training under adverse condition, survival skills, team work, and many other things that are simple and often times taken for granted but are necessary for behavioral and character formation.
5. By law and procedure, the ROTC Program is administered by the DND/AFP, CHED, DILG and the schools. The AFP has done well, notwithstanding a few flaws in instituting the program. Through the ROTC Program, the AFP can relate to and help educate the youth.
6. Although our country is at peace, time and again, there are national calamities such as the recent Mindanao conflict, the Abu Sayyaf rebellion and even the rebellious attacks in Malacanang, and it is always a good policy to provide the AFP with a reserve core that can be easily mobilized and tasked to serve the emergency needs of the nation such as during the last destructive 1990 earthquake and Mt Pinatubo eruption in 1991. The ROTC officers and members have often times coordinated with public officials in the manning of assistance and relief work, clean-up campaigns, and rehabilitation and civic community development programs.

In view of the above and many other good and valid reasons too numerous to be mentioned here, we appeal ***for the retention of the ROTC Program*** which has served the nation well. Notwithstanding, isolated cases of irregularities, the ROTC remains a valuable tool in the total education and character formation of the youth.

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304 WW2 bombs kept in lot

By Vicente Labro
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—The city police office here has filed on Wednesday an illegal possession of ammunition case at the city prosecutor's office against the owner of a lot on Barangay 64, this city, where 304 pieces of World War II vintage bombs were recovered.

Named respondents in the case were Alfredo Santiago Sr. and his wife Lolita, who were accused of stashing war vintage bombs dug from different parts of Leyte and recycling the gunpowder into homemade pyrotechnics and dynamites.

The existence of World War II bombs was discovered by authorities when an explosion occurred at the Santiago compound around 1 p.m. last April 29. Four men were reportedly seen on the scene but they immediately fled.

Reynaldo Casañas, a neighbor of the Santiagos, said in an affidavit attached to the complaint that the explosion damaged his house, destroying some P80,000 worth of fixtures and furniture.

After the explosion, the Explosives Ordnance Disposal Team (EODT) of the Philippine National Police here conducted an inspection in the area, including at the damaged warehouse and the house of the Santiagos.

The team was able to recover unexploded ordnance in an open pit while 155 bombs were found buried in the ground, some of them up to eight feet deep.

Police said that aside from the rusting bombs, they also recovered from the place 34 sacks of ammonium nitrate and some cartons reportedly used in the manufacture of pyrotechnics.

This made police believe that the Santiagos were into dynamite or pyrotechnics making, using the powder from the old bombs.

The bombs, the police learned, were brought from different Leyte towns to the Santiago compound in Barangay 64 for safekeeping.

In a certification attached to the complaint, Senior Insp. Carlito Gallardo of the EODT said 304 bombs have been retrieved. Out of this number, 209 were detonated at a disposal area in Sitio Hilaba Barangay Legaspi, Marabut, Samar.

At least 90 of these old bombs were still in the Santiago compound waiting to be detonated.

This city was one of the several landing points of the Allied Liberation Forces led by Gen. Douglas MacArthur on Oct. 20, 1944. This could explain the presence of World War II vintage bombs here, according to authorities.

From the eastern part of Leyte, the liberation forces moved toward other parts of the region and the country until the Philippines was finally liberated from the Japanese occupation forces.

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms.
SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with rains	HI 31° Lo 24°
Baguio	Cloudy with rains	HI 23° Lo 15°
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with rains	HI 30° Lo 25°
Laoag	Cloudy with rains	HI 31° Lo 24°
Clark Zone	Cloudy with rains	HI 31° Lo 23°
Tagaytay	Cloudy with rains	HI 30° Lo 22°
Legazpi	Cloudy with rains	HI 30° Lo 23°
Calapan	Cloudy with rains	HI 30° Lo 23°
Bacolod	Cloudy with rains	HI 30° Lo 24°
Roxas	Cloudy with rains	HI 30° Lo 24°
Cebu	Cloudy with rains	HI 31° Lo 24°
Tacloban	Cloudy with rains	HI 31° Lo 25°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with rains	HI 31° Lo 25°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with rains	HI 30° Lo 24°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with rains	HI 31° Lo 23°
Davao	Cloudy with rains	HI 31° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/08/06/01

ROUNDUP

P94M in revenue reported

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—The Bureau of Customs here reported a cash revenue collection of P94 million despite the continuing depreciation of the peso. Nestlé Philippines topped the list of firms that paid duties. It was followed by Del Monte Philippines Inc. Marietta Zamoranos, customs district collector, told the INQUIRER they could have collected more revenue if some firms, including CoreSteel, a manufacturer of hot-rolled coil, in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, did not close.
Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Irrigation repair

DIGOS CITY—A 40-year-old irrigation system in Matanao town is up for a major facelift following the signing of a memorandum of agreement between the National Irrigation Administration, the Department of Agrarian Reform and the local government. Victor Cubita, provincial agrarian reform officer, said the agreement paves the way for the setting aside of about P39 million for the expansion of the Badagoy Communal Irrigation Project. The expansion of the irrigation project was made possible through a financial package provided by the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) under the Agrarian Reform Infrastructure Support Project-II.
Allan Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Increased tax collection

ZAMBOANGA CITY—For the past seven months, the Bureau of Customs here has collected P139 million in revenue compared to last year's collection of P19 million. Customs district collector Lourdes Mangaoang said rice importation by the National Food Authority was a big factor in the increase of revenue collection. "This proves how serious our office (is) in helping our economy and how dedicated our personnel (are) in trying to weed out anomalous transactions," Mangaoang said.
Julie Alipala-Inot, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Widow robbed, killed

CALBAYOG CITY—A 55-year-old widow was found dead by her relatives inside her bathroom early Wednesday morning. Filomena Lao, manager of Breadmix Restaurant here, bore several stab wounds in the abdomen. Her throat was slashed and her fingers were deformed probably because she fought her attacker. Lao, a native of San Jose, Northern Samar, was living in one of the buildings adjacent to the restaurant. Relatives of the victim said Lao's cash box was forcibly opened and the two-day earnings of the restaurant and some valuables were missing. Police said robbery was the likely motive for the killing. Both the local police and the National Bureau of Investigation are investigating the case.
Vicente Labro, PDI Visayas Bureau

Mayor disqualified

TACLOBAN CITY—The Commission on Elections second division disqualified the mayor-elect of Oras town in Eastern Samar for failing to meet the required one-year residency in the town. In a July 19 resolution, the Comelec ordered the municipal election officer to cancel the name of proclaimed Mayor Teodulo Coquilla from the list of qualified mayoral candidates for Oras. The Comelec said Coquilla was short of six months to be eligible to run for an elective post in Oras. It said records proved that Coquilla, a former US Navy man who resided in the States for 30 years, reacquired his Filipino citizenship only on Nov. 20, 2000. Coquilla, in his affidavit filed before the Comelec, said he was living in Oras for two years prior to the May 14 elections. Since his retirement from the US Navy in 1985, he said he occasionally stayed in Oras. But the Comelec said Coquilla's visits to Oras could not be considered as residence. Also, he was an American citizen during that time. Semaco Sacmar, Coquilla's legal counsel, said the mayor would not vacate his post as they intend to file a motion for reconsideration before the Comelec.
Joey Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau

Stolen TVs recovered

MANGALDAN, Pangasinan—The traffic management group and the police here recovered 11 TV sets which were part of the 440 TV sets seized by robbers last May at the North Expressway. Supt. Bernardo Reamon, police chief here, said the 20-inch TV sets manufactured at the Clark Export Processing Zone were about to be transported to the South Harbor in Manila when a group of men blocked the van's way and took over the vehicle. Reamon said some of the TV sets were sold in a hardware store here and other towns in Pangasinan and Baguio City.
Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Media man sues cop

BALAGTAS, Bulacan—For throwing eggs at a reporter here, a deputy police officer here is facing an inquiry by the provincial board and the Bulacan police administrative office. Cecilio Franista, a columnist of a local paper, said in his complaint that Senior Insp. Venanda Calaunan hit him with a dozen eggs inside a plastic bag he was carrying when Franista asked him about the whereabouts of the police chief. Franista said he was looking for the police chief to verify reports of marijuana seized by the police last week.
Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Lawyers' group plans GMO suit

DAVAO CITY—The Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) here announced plans to seek legal action against two government agencies to compel them to implement the mandatory labeling of food products that contain Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs).

Lawyer Ramon Edison Batacan, president and chair of the committee on environment of the IBP-Davao chapter, said he is now looking into the possibility of instituting legal actions against the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department of Health on product labeling.

This developed after various nongovernment organizations and consumer groups sought the help of the IBP on the correct labeling of genetically engineered food products in the Philippines.

Batacan told a local radio program here that it is important for the two government agencies to enforce mandatory labeling because Filipinos are not fully educated on the adverse effects of genetically engineered food.

He said consumers must be given the right to choose their food through the proper labeling of the contents or ingredients of the product.

"There must be some measures because the food that we feed our children may contain GMOs," he said.

He said even imported food products should have labels that say whether they contain GMOs or not.

He said the spread of GMO products is part of a bigger scheme to monopolize the Philippine consumer market. The technology to produce GMOs, he said, has been patented by big multinational firms.

One of them, Monsanto, has the sole patent for genetic crops.

Batacan said Third World countries that do not have the technology to produce GMOs would be dependent on industrialized nations that have the technology to produce genetic food.

This, he said, would "slowly kill indigenous" agriculture.

"There is no study about its effects on the environment. But there are indications that GMOs have adverse effects on health such as increased resistance to antibiotics . . . (and) allergies," said Batacan.

He also warned consumers of food containing soya, corn or potato, especially those that come from the US, Canada and Argentina. He said these may contain GMOs. *Ayan Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

QUARANTINE ALERT

DA stays vigilant on FMD

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Quarantine stations of the Department of Agriculture in Clark and Subic are keeping their vigilance against the foot-and-mouth disease, mad cow and bird flu viruses despite the lifting of the ban on imported frozen pork and other pork products from Europe last July.

Quarantine checkpoints in the access roads of Pangasinan, Cagayan Valley and Metro Manila to Central Luzon's six provinces are also being keenly watched, according to Pepito de Dote, regional agriculture director.

De Dote said caution continued to be exercised because Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor maintained the ban on imported pork from the United Kingdom, Ireland, France and The Netherlands where the FMD was confined.

Montemayor, in his July 13 memorandum, said continental Europe has "finally put a total control on (its) FMD crisis and no cases had been reported."

He also noted that the risk of contamination from importing pork, pork products and byproducts from Europe, except from the four countries, was "negligible."

European veterinary authorities, he added, have maintained all precautionary measures to prevent the spread of FMD to other countries in the continent.

The Philippine government relaxed the ban, which was in effect for almost eight months, after the United States and Japan ended their own import prohibitions.

Montemayor set two conditions for the resumption of importation. Animals should come from farms where no clinical sign of any disease was observed and that these should have been slaughtered in an approved abattoir for export.

De Dote said the potential sources of FMD-infected livestock in Central Luzon are auction markets in Pangasinan.

The demand of food processing companies for cheaper imported pork continued to be high despite a surplus of 540,766 metric tons of local pork in Central Luzon, which ranked second in pork production in the country.

While there was a surplus of chicken meat and eggs in the region, the supply of beef and carabao meat were short, the DA said in a report released here. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Negros town vacuum filled up

BACOLOD CITY—After being ruled by a "caretaker" for more than a month, the town of San Enrique will finally have a mayor.

The Commission on Elections' second division junked a pre-proclamation protest filed by losing mayoral candidate Julius Lanzar of Promdi for lack of merit.

Instead, the poll body upheld the ruling of the Municipal Board of Canvassers that declared Jilson Tubillara of the local party Aton Tamdon Utod Negrosanon (ATUN) as the winner in the mayoral race of San Enrique, 37 kilometers south of this city.

The Comelec also upheld the board's decision to declare the winners for the vice mayoral and the municipal council elections.

The proclamation of the winners is expected today. *Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

In Pampanga, don't look for gov in office

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Gov. Manuel Lapid has not been suspended for a graft case now pending at the Sandiganbayan. Pampanga, he said, is his top priority even as he serves as President Macapagal-Arroyo's special emissary to urban poor communities.

Lapid, however, has always been absent at the provincial capitol, reporting only on Mondays and holding office for two hours at the most since June 30, the INQUIRER learned.

The governor's absences have not been recorded in time cards because the capitol's bundy clock has been out of order for the last three years.

But several provincial board members, mayors, capitol officials and employees as well as reporters covering the provincial government have confirmed Lapid's absences.

Fidel Arcenas, Lapid's technical adviser, has agreed with what is now a common observation but clarified that the governor has not violated the Local Government Code, which requires elected officials to report for work on weekdays.

Meetings

"True, he has not been coming to office daily but that's because he has been meeting legislators, Cabinet officials and investors. These (meetings) are part of his official functions," Arcenas told the INQUIRER Friday.

Asked what these meetings were about, Arcenas said much of these were on the assistance that the province needs for employment and calamity programs.

"He's practically begging (for help)," he added.

Lapid, he noted, has a "flexible schedule" and holds official meetings even at night, sometimes in his Porac residence.

Throughout July, Lapid's official working hours had also been spent visiting urban poor communities in Metro Manila, holding dialogues there as emissary of the President.

Provincial Administrator Benalfre Galang also said Lapid took three days off for his arraignment and pretrial in connection with a P104-million land scam.

Other jobs

Arcenas and Galang declined to comment on reports that Lapid played golf in Clark, directed his son Mark's "Dugong Aso" movie, worked in his farm in Porac or holed up in his apartment in Subic, Zambales, during the official hours he should have been working at the capitol.

Often, capitol personnel were overheard making phone inquiries on where Lapid was so they could deliver to him documents due for signing.

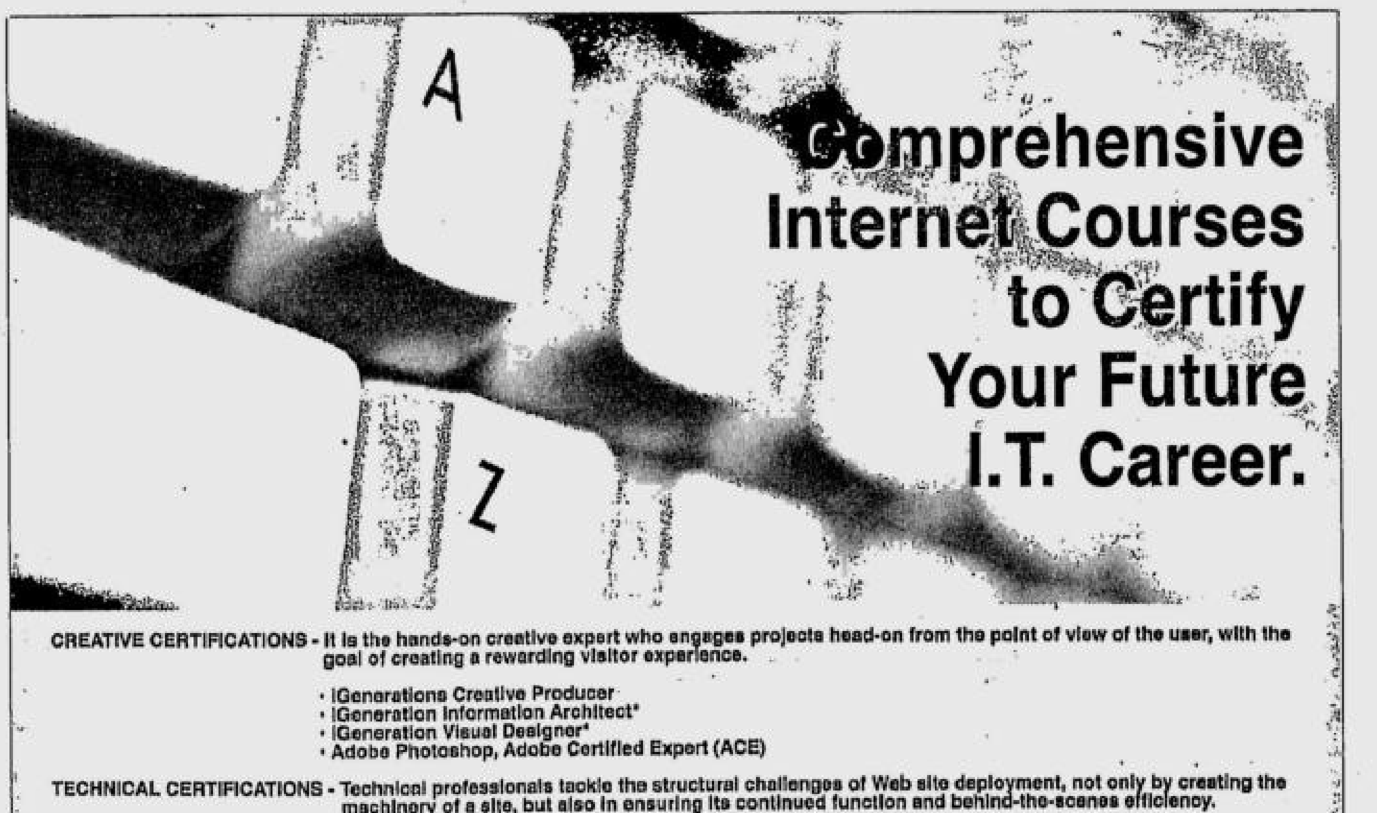
The issue of absenteeism, a matter of public interest, has apparently irked Lapid.

"I could not get help for the province if I stay in my office most of the time," he told the INQUIRER by telephone in Filipino.

Aid-seekers

He admitted he did not report for work on purpose during the first two weeks of his third term because he has "no money to give" to aid-seekers who flock to the provincial capitol to ask for financial help.

"I am assuring you that I am working for the welfare of our province. I have obligations that I need to attend to outside of my office," he said.



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The US money trail

(From page A1)

and Estrada in Citibank and Bank of America branches in the United States, Hong Kong and Canada.

Military intelligence chief Victor Corpus says more deposits have been uncovered, bringing the figure to at least $1 billion.

As early as February, US authorities "informally confirmed" that Lacson had an estimated $320 million stashed in American banks, according to team leader Col. Mario Chan of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

The INQUIRER covered the team on its mission in San Francisco in June. The team handed over its mission report, dated June 28, to Corpus, who, in turn, submitted it to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The alleged US confirmation prompted the team to enlist the help of the US Customs Service and embark on a "full-blown investigation" that unearthed the discovery of several accounts, houses and firms allegedly owned by the Lacson couple and Chinese-Filipino businessman Robert Co.

While in the United States in June, the team discovered a bank account containing $20 million under the name of Alice Lacson. The account was kept in a Bank of America branch in Van Nuys, California, Chan said.

One is not enough

The team traced the account from a check issued by Alice Lacson to buy two Toyota Sequioa sports utility vehicles in the first quarter of this year.

The Sequioas were purchased in Los Angeles, California, Senior Supt. Rodolfo "Boogie" Mendoza Jr. of the Philippine National Police Intelligence Group, a member of the six-person team, told the INQUIRER.

Alice's bank account led to the discovery of the senator's bank account at Bank of America in New York, Chan said. The account was opened in 1996 with an initial deposit of $18,000, he said.

Pursuing a lead from the US Customs Service, Isafp Chief Col. Victor Corpus, using "unofficial channels," said he later confirmed that the New York account grew from $18,000 to $38.45 million by July 20, 2001.

Another tip

In late June, the trail warmed further. A controversial witness to alleged crimes committed by the now defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force, ex-civilian agent Angelo Mawanay, aka "Ador," gave military intelligence agents another lead, Corpus told the INQUIRER.

Ador told them that Lacson ordered him last year to travel to the United States and withdraw $2 million on his behalf from a time deposit in a Citibank branch in San Francisco.

"Ador's trip did not push through, but he was able to take down Lacson's Citibank account number," Corpus said.

According to Ador, the money was deposited at the Citibank branch on 19th Street, San Francisco, under Account No. 0102-7720-0045-5000.

Los Angeles, California
Santa Clarita
San Fernando
Tapo Canyon Park
Thousand Oaks
Agoura Hills
Malibu
Panorama City
Beverly Hills
San Francisco
State of California
Los Angeles
Chula Vista
INQMAP: ESAMBO

LACSON'S alleged assets are found in these cities in California, according to a Philippine military intelligence mission.

Ador said Lacson instructed him to hand over the $2 million to a certain Marco Odsiñada of Asia Pacific Entertainment Network, whose address was given as 5425 Cristal Ford Lane, Centerville, Virginia.

"Lacson's instructions to Ador were to withdraw the money and deliver it to this guy," said Corpus, who added that the ex-agent had no other information about Odsiñada or his supposed ties with Lacson.

Isafp agents pursued the lead. Corpus said they found that Lacson opened this particular account on Feb. 21, 1997 with a deposit of $250,000. By July this year, the balance had grown to $24,457,685, the intelligence chief said.

Spectacular

This spectacular increase in deposits was not unique among the alleged Lacson-owned accounts, Corpus said.

The balance in the Lacson couple's alleged joint account at a Citibank branch at 111 Wall Street in New York, under Account No. 0800-6459-0056-5000, shot up from $500,000 on May 21, 1997 to $21,500,436 as of July this year, he said.

Another example is Lacson's savings account (No. 0800-5565-0067-8000) at a Citibank branch at 2000 Irding St. in San Francisco, he added. Opened on March 20, 1997, with a deposit of $250,000, by this July, it had swelled to $34,334,720.

Lacson also allegedly opened another account at another Citibank branch at 120 Broadway in New York in November 2000. From $5 million, the balance in Account No. 0800-1471-0000-6000 has grown to $11,500,436.

He allegedly opened yet another Citibank account (No. 0800-5542-0026-5000) in West Toronto in Canada with a starting balance of $2 million on Nov. 21, 2000. It now contains $21,720,333, Corpus said.

How much in pesos?

Lacson has strongly denied maintaining bank deposits abroad, saying all his accounts are in the country.

The senator alone, according to the intelligence information, has eight personal accounts in the United States, Hong Kong and Canada amounting to $211,388,420 (P11.3 billion), while his joint account with wife Alice, also in the United States, contains $21,500,436 (P1.1 billion).

Ms Lacson also allegedly maintains two personal accounts in Las Vegas and Washington worth $40,357,078 (P2.15 billion).

Lacson and Estrada allegedly have six joint accounts at Citibank branches in Hong Kong, with deposits totaling $118,833,107 (P6.3 billion), while Estrada has one personal account at Citibank branch also in Hong Kong containing $336,421,250 (P18 billion).

Corpus declined to say how Isafp was able to gather such specific information regarding the bank accounts, but promised to disclose its methods under the "appropriate" circumstances.

US participation

"The US government took an interest and helped the Philippine joint team in its various intelligence networking and information collection operations," Chan said.

"The US Customs Service conducted its own federal investigation on Lacson's (alleged) money-laundering."

In early June, the team met with US Customs Service officials in Hong Kong, who reviewed the documentary as well as testimonial evidence provided by the AFP and PNP before they endorsed the investigation, Chan said.

Douglas Creer, a senior special agent of the US Customs' Office of the Internal Affairs, stressed in the meeting in Hong Kong that the Americans wanted to determine that joint team's mission was "not politically motivated," Chan said in the report.

Creer also wanted to establish that no specific agency or office of the US Embassy in Manila would be "negatively affected" by the investigations, Chan said.

He said Creer recommended that the team should proceed to San Francisco, convince US customs officials to cooperate in an investigation, and file a criminal suit rather than a civil spit against Lacson. The team left Hong Kong for the US West Coast on June 5.

"What the US authorities wanted to achieve is not only to find the money (Lacson's bank accounts) but also to go for the freezing, seizure and eventual forfeiture of Lacson's money in favor of both the US and the Philippine governments," according to Chan in the mission report submitted to Corpus.

Handcuffs and a suit

The extent of Lacson's alleged ill-gotten wealth in the United States led a US citizen to consider filing a civil and possibly criminal lawsuit against the senator to enable her to recover P30 million allegedly owed her by the PNP, according to Chan.

The proposed cases stemmed from Lacson's failure to settle the PNP's debt to. Blanquita Pelaez, a US citizen, in a handcuffs sales deal, even after local courts and the Philippine Senate found that her claims carried weight.

"Lacson, who was then the PNP chief, blatantly refused to settle the financial obligation with Pelaez. The PNP purchased handcuffs from Smith and Wesson, which Pelaez represented in the Philippines," Chan said.

The lawsuit was "designed" for Pelaez to ask US federal attorneys to request for grand jury subpoenas on Lacson's bank records and properties in the United States, Chan said in his report to Corpus at the end of the mission.

Mary Ong, alias "Rosebud," a former PAOCTF agent-turned-whistle-blower, was tapped by the joint team as a corroborating witness for the US federal case against Lacson, Chan said.

The team, composed of Chan, Pelaez, Ong, Mendoza, Egdon Liscano of the PNP Intelligence Group and lawyer Stephen Jarumay, who acted as the team's counsel, left for Hong Kong on June 2 and returned to Manila a month later.

The mission was terminated on July 3, but the Isafp continued the investigation here in a bid to confirm other bank accounts through the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty between Manila and Washington.

Taking off from the leads provided by the US Customs Service, Corpus continued the investigation in Manila using "unofficial channels" and found that Lacson had $500 million in deposits in the United States, Hong Kong and Canada.

The US Customs Service in San Francisco is still evaluating whether it should tap Ong as a witness against Lacson's alleged money-laundering activities, according to Chan.

Lacson, Estrada dare Corpus: Show evidence

(From page A1)

charges beyond reasonable doubt as long as he can present verifiable evidence to show that I have millions in America."

"My challenge is: Present evidence authenticated by any US authority, any US bank or US customs, and I'll go straight to jail without trial. I'll jail myself," said the controversial Philippine National Police chief during the Estrada administration.

Estrada also asked Corpus "to produce genuine documents validated by the banks."

"If they can prove that these (dollar accounts) are mine, then I'm willing to donate these to the organizations of the poor and other orphanages. And I'm willing to go straight to Muntinlupa," he added.

Estrada, who has been detained at the Veterans Medical Memorial Center and charged with plunder, said Corpus' allegations were "clearly designed to influence the courts and create prejudice in the cases pending against me."

In the radio interview, Lacson said he could not have opened a bank account in the United States because he didn't have a social security number there.

"You can only open an account there if you have a social security number," he said.

"These people are running out of ideas. They're no longer using their heads. They should think of a better script."

Lacson welcomed Corpus' disclosure of the various foreign bank account numbers allegedly belonging to him, saying it would now be easy to verify if the accounts were indeed his.

Lacson said he had asked US authorities to expedite their investigation that he and Estrada allegedly laundered millions of dollars in the United States.

According to him, he made the request to the US justice department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation as early as June when he learned from Justice Secretary Hernando Perez that such an investigation was going on.

Lacson said some of his men had talked with US customs officials who, in turn, told them they had nothing to pin him down.

Next step

He said he planned to deliver a privilege speech at the Senate today on Corpus' allegations, adding he was leaving it to his peers to initiate an inquiry.Senate President Franklin Drilon said the chamber would investigate the charges against Lacson. "These charges are so serious, they must be investigated," he said.

Senators Ramon Revilla and Robert Barbers have filed separate resolutions seeking an investigation of the charges.In an earlier interview with Agence France Presse, Lacson dismissed the charges as part of a "demolition job" to deter him from running against President Macapagal-Arroyo in 2004.

"I cannot see any more plausible explanation for what they're doing," he told the French news agency.

In his press statement, Estrada said Corpus' report was meant to "besmirch" his reputation further.

He threatened to file a libel suit against Corpus, the INQUIRER and other individuals "who have peddled lies against my wife, Sen. Loi Ejercito, and me."

"I have not pursued any libel suit against anybody, but this one forces me to bring the issue to the courts to its logical end, if only to find out who is telling the truth and who are telling lies," he said.

Saguisag

Estrada's lawyer, former Sen. Rene Saguisag, confirmed that his client had instructed him to study the possibility of filing a libel suit against the INQUIRER.

"If it were left to me, though, I'd file a P1 libel suit against the INQUIRER, just to prove a point," Saguisag said.

"Not a single line of it (the INQUIRER story) was true," he quoted Estrada as saying.

Saguisag also complained that the INQUIRER did not try to get Estrada's side before coming out with the story on Corpus' report.

"*Na-Corpus-yente kayo* (You've been fed a bum steer," he told the INQUIRER. ***With reports from Donna S. Cueto, Cathy Cañares-Yamsuan and AFP***

'Ping has US homes, too'

(From page A1)

ring to the ex-PNP chief's top aides.

The intelligence team also has in its possession county documents showing that Lacson sold a house at 1011 Laguna Seca Loop, Chula Vista in California in 1999.

Based on the documents, which were included in a report submitted to President Macapagal-Arroyo, Lacson gave his younger brother Ernani power of attorney in transacting property deals. Chan said the property was worth $750,000.

Ernani Lácson is a former US Navy officer with the rank of lieutenant commander.

According to Chan, Lacson did not declare these assets and dollar bank accounts in his yearly statements of assets and liabilities. "Lacson had no visible and legal means of acquiring these properties and bank accounts while he was in the government service," Chan said.

"The move to seek an indictment of Lacson for large-scale money laundering in the United States was considered because of the impartial nature of the US judicial system which even the well-influenced Lacson could not manipulate," the intelligence officer said in his report.

"It is believed that the US courts can render swift and fair judgment of Lacson's case, which will finally expose the true nature of this corrupt and nefarious individual," according to Chan's report.

The team has attributed a delay in the supposed convening of a US federal grand jury to a backlog of cases being handled by the US Customs.Service.

SSS shaken by rabble power, not people power

(From page A1)

ungovernable society.

It has plunged Filipino society into an increasingly recurrent impasse, paralysis and breakdown of the government's capacity to rule.

When I say paralysis of government, I am not referring in particular to the Macapagal administration. Any government, as an institution with a mandate to rule, can easily be crippled by the unbridled power of the rabble to veto its decisions.

The latest manifestation of rabble power is the Macapagal administration's capitulation to the pressure of the rabble in the Social Security System (SSS) to dismiss its chief executive for seven months, Vitaliano Nañagas II, mainly because his management style offended them.

Reduced to its basic element, the conflict between Nañagas and the SSS union was over bad chemistry—a personal issue.

Union members accused him of being "despotic" and "tyrannical." It's as though Nañagas had sent some of them to the gallows for being inefficient or for looking the other way when the past management diverted vast sums of SSS pension funds to risky behest investments to favor cronies of the previous administration.

The real reasons behind Nañagas' removal had little to do with his management style. They sprang from a raft of reforms he initiated, among them transparency, reducing the time for the processing of SSS benefits, cutting fat salaries of selected senior executives and subjecting to audit questionable behest investments.

Not a coincidence

It was not a coincidence that the union turned a blind eye to these investments that put the pension benefits of SSS members at risk or that Horace Templo, SSS vice president responsible for investments, closed ranks with the union to demand the dismissal of Nañagas.

Crispin Beltran, head of the union federation with which the SSS union is affiliated, gave the dispute an ideological color.

The union claims its clash with Nañagas arose from his plan to privatize the SSS. That's a valid issue—as valid as the issue over the insertion of the Philippines into the global trading order.

What's ironical is that historically, the Left ideology, when installed in power, is biased toward a strong central state.

But when the government said it was not going ahead with the plan, the union not only conveniently ignored this. It continued to use the privatization issue to camouflage its particularistic demand—management style and all that went with it—in its effort to thwart reforms.

In the SSS dispute, we see the conflict between the right of government to manage public business with its policy and its designated managers, and the action by the rabble to resist this right.

This clash repeats a series of conflicts over reform decisions and actions of government in the Bureau of Internal Revenue, the Department of Education, Culture and Sports, and the Department of Tourism.

In these cases, rabble power—calling itself "people power"—erupted to frustrate reforms. It is not only in the civil service where this perversion of people power has taken place.

Agitators and demagogues are trigger-happy to unleash the rabble to storm judicial bodies, such as the Commission on Elections (in the case of the disqualification of the Mamamayan Ayaw sa Droga as a party-list organization) or the Supreme Court (in the case of its decision over the legitimacy of the sitting administration).

Larger picture

The larger picture is the conflict between institutions and particularistic, narrow and even personalistic interests.

The picture is different from that of Edsa I and II; thus, the Edsa analogy can't be used to justify the SSS paralysis and the others cited above.

In Edsa I and II, people rose to change regimes that had been shown to abuse power and to plunder public wealth. They were mass movements involving political change.

The storming of the Palace on May 1 was a rebellion, feeding on the social grievances of the poor to replace a government that was barely five months in power—not enough time to loot, if that was its purpose.

The so-called "Edsa Tres" was a conflict over policy that the government implemented. That policy was the filing of plunder charges against ousted leader Joseph Estrada and his arrest.

The rabble attack on the seat of government on May 1 represented resistance to a principle—that of due process and the equal treatment of citizens, rich or poor, before the law.

Pressure groups

The showdown at SSS was over government's right to govern against the claim of pressure groups—including unions in government offices and members of "civil society"—to have a franchise to obstruct and overturn reasonable decisions, using strikes and walkouts to paralyze public service.

SSS union members were euphoric they succeeded in removing Nañagas. Now, other unions in government are threatening to use the SSS model to reject new managers, block reforms and obstruct policies they don't like, or even protect crooks inside the bureaucracy who might be purged by reforms.

The SSS union members were, in effect, celebrating the impotence of democracy as a system to organize government and society.

The Macapagal administration can't mask its cave-in to rabble pressure by saying the SSS case would be the last time it would bow to this form of bureaucratic browbeating.

The unions in government have smelled blood. They have seen weakness in the government's resolve to stick to principles of governance.

Should unions at the Development Bank of the Philippines dislike Nañagas, could they also slam the door on him?

Should Corazon de la Paz fail to coddle the SSS unions, what could stop the unions from demanding her dismissal?

Severely impaired

In all these manifestations of rebellion against institutions and the authority of government to rule and even against its right to manage public administration according to its policy, it has been shown that the capacity of Philippine democracy to produce effective government has been severely impaired.

The government has abdicated its right to govern against pressure from particularistic groups exercising an effective veto power over its decisions.

The pendulum of power has swung toward the extreme favoring the notion that the interests of private groups and individual citizens are superior to the interests of the government's right to rule.

This swing has been propelled by the notion in Philippine democracy that a citizen's individual rights are more important than the welfare of a national community.

The pendulum has to be pulled back to the center of political moderation.

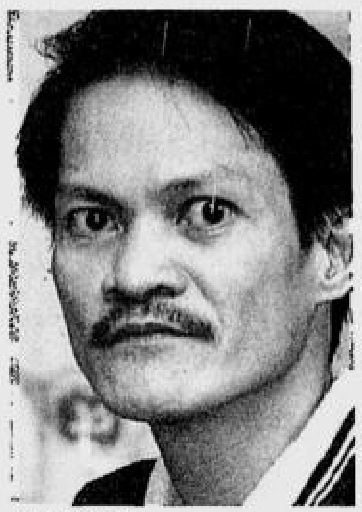
The ascendance of this notion bodes ill for the chaotic Filipino democracy, bereft of a civic culture. Disorder and the failure to govern invite the intervention of the military to reimpose obedience to the State. But a military dictatorship is not the solution.

Filipinos have failed to make democracy work for the interests of the national community. Filipinos have also failed in their diversion toward a dictatorship under Ferdinand Marcos. We have made a mess of both regime types.

To prevent further erosion of its authority, this administration should put a halt to the assaults by pressure groups and lay its life on the line. If the showdown leads to widespread paralysis and civil disorder, so be it. At the bottom line, the rabble should not be allowed to rule and the government cannot exist in a vacuum.

'Brod Pete' lives on

(From page A1)



SIONGCO

Moises Emiterio Siongco, 43, a bookbinder and photocopy operator in Sampaloc, Manila, is a proud lookalike of and sounds like Isko Salvador, aka Brod Pete, the lean comedian who delivers punch lines with a natural deadpan face.

Students, mostly from the University of Santo Tomas, frequent Siongco's house nearby on Antonio Street to avail themselves of his photocopying or bookbinding services.

He is nicknamed Sonny, but students prefer to call him Brod Pete because of his striking similarities with the comedian of the once popular TV gag segment "Ang Dating Doon."

It all started when a group of students visited his place in 1999 at the height of Salvador's popularity, Sonny recalls.

Out of the blue, someone called him Brod Pete and the group exploded into laughter. "Oh yes, why didn't I think of that," they told one another in Filipino.

The word spread and he has since been known by that name. He has become a hit among students, and more customers came his way.

Friendship comes naturally for Sonny. In his pictures, he was usually with several friends who consider him peace-loving. When friends blow their top during drinking sessions, he is the first to mediate.

No matter how angry, a friend would burst into laughter once he cracks his jokes Brod Pete-style. "I don't like fighting, I like to be happy always," he said in Filipino.

He has his own problems, though, but he has learned to deal with them with laughter. This formula has proven to be effective so far.

He has not won himself a wife yet since he got "married," he says, to alcohol way back in high school.

"When you're in Manila, you get to experience all these out of curiosity," he explained.

His parents, Ignacio Sr., a bookbinder, and Patrocinio, a schoolteacher, had been worried about him. They had scolded him and urged him to focus on his studies.

Despite his vices, young Sonny had a sense of purpose. "We were poor, I knew I needed to finish my studies and progress."

He earned his Accounting degree and was among the promising graduates of UST in 1978.

Nine months later, he got his first paycheck as a staff auditor at Sycip, Gorres and Velayo. He had yet to pass the board, but he was already earning P700 a month.

Sonny failed to pass the board exam, much to the surprise of his officemates. He didn't show up at SGV afterward.

Sonny, however, knew how to handle the problem. For the next few months, he would drink gin with his brothers and friends on Antonio Street.

Those were the happiest moments of his life, but Sonny was determined to succeed, not just at the drinking table.

In August 1980, he worked as external auditor for a Mandaluyong-based construction firm.

Impressed by his efficiency and work ethic, the company sent him to Brunei a year later to work on a project there. He was promised at least P3,000 a month.

But the project, he later found out, was bound to fail since its managers were pocketing its capital. His salary was perennially delayed, as well.

Disgusted, Sonny went back to Manila and made use of his old formula for solving problems. "I resorted again to laughter."

Sonny reunited with his friends. As in the good old days, they spent days and nights in drinking and revelry.

While waiting for yet another break, he helped his brother Quinn and his father run the family business. Soon he learned how to do bookbinding.

In 1983, Sonny and brother Ignacio flew to Saudi Arabia to work both as auditors in a construction firm.

One day, he found that the project was nearing bankruptcy. He knew this would mean a salary delay.

Upon his return in 1987, Sonny went full-time in the family business and invested some of his earnings in it.

That same year, he and his brothers bought a second-hand photocopying machine for P10,000. They were among the few businessmen around UST who had such an equipment. It was a big hit.

13 hostages freed; another beheaded

(From page A1)

already dead when he was beheaded. His head was thrown to the bushes. It was really very horrifying scene," Husain said in Chavacano.

Two other hostages, Raymond Timpangco and Juan Taup, remain missing.

Ordeal

One of the hostages, Joselito Esteban, said they walked for three days and three nights, sometimes taking a rest in abandoned huts.

"We avoided the main roads. I could no longer remember how many rivers, some of them were neck-deep, we crossed. They (Abu Sayyaf bandits) carried the children when crossing the rivers," Esteban said in Visayan.

The children's legs and arms have rashes and mosquito bites. "It's because of the grasses and stones, but they treated and fed us well," Hermie Revillas said.

She said she and her son Aris survived the ordeal by sticking close to each other and striking up conversations with the bandits.

The hostages said they were fed biscuits, rice and sardines.

Those freed were brought to the firing range of the 103rd Army Brigade in Upper Kapatagan Grande in Isabela City.

Revillas said she was very excited to return to Lamitan to check their property and see her other children and husband Edgardo.

But when told that her husband was among those beheaded, Revillas fought back tears and said: "I don't believe it, the Abu Sayyaf (bandits) said they left them in Lamitan."

"I have to see the body first," Revillas said.

"I thought it would be a happy reunion as soon as we reached Balobo," she later said.

She said she had to be strong for her son.

Cecilia Ramirez said she also could not believe the news that her husband Tereso was among those beheaded.

Col. Hermogenes Esperon, 103rd Army Brigade chief, admitted not telling the women about the deaths of their husbands "because after we got them and brought them here, they were all happy, and I didn't want to dampen their spirits."

CECILIA Ramirez and her daughter Crizelle weep at a military camp after soldiers rescued them and 11 other hostages of the Abu Sayyaf. REUTERS

The freed hostages were later brought to Lamitan where they were turned over to Mayor Inocente Ramos.

Military pressure

Camiling said military pressure forced the bandits to free the hostages.

But Cecilia Ramirez, one of those released, said the bandits abandoned them "along the highway because they received orders from Khadaffy that we were supposed to be freed."

Camiling said that based on the assessment of the military officials, "those (Abu) Sayyaf (bandits) were on a test mission. They were very young, because if they were really battle-tested fighters, they would never free their captives even (under) heavy military pressure."

Earlier reports said the bandits were aged 20 to 30 years old.

Brig. Gen. Glicerio Sua, chief of the 1st Tabak Division, said aerial assaults should have been mounted Saturday "but because they (bandits) were still holding the captives, we tried to maneuver to force the release."

The military started the assaults at 8 a.m. yesterday.

"I would like to inform those senators in Manila to understand the situation of our soldiers here. I know some of them have gone to Cotabato, but the terrain here is different and contrary to what they claim, we are doing our best to end this Sayyaf menace," Camiling said.

Sua even suggested that the senators visit all the advance command posts of the military in the battlefield "for them to see the real situation."

"What they see in the map is different from the actual battle site," Sua said.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon on Saturday urged the government to address the Abu Sayyaf problem as its immediate top priority.

"It is really serious, the effect on our national economic life is terrible. The downtrend of the country's political situation and economic slump will continue unless the Abu Sayyaf is resolved once and for all," Biazon said.

Biazon said "the government should send more troops and equipment to Basilan to finish the problem."

Probe

In Manila, Bukidnon Rep. Nerio Acosta (LP) is seeking a probe into the government's handling of the Abu Sayyaf problem amid charges that some military officers were partaking of the ransom money being amassed by the bandits.

"There is a growing frustration at the extremely slow pace of resolving this problem," Acosta said. "Many are wondering how a small band of bandits can hold hostage an entire economy."

Acosta is set to file a resolution today calling for a congressional investigation into the current state of the military campaign.

The Abu Sayyaf has been running circles around the eight government battalions deployed in Basilan.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines has denied charges that some of its officers in the South were in cahoots with the bandits.

"It is high time for us to determine what must be done to finally put this matter to rest," Acosta said.

Acosta noted that there appears to be a "seeming helplessness" by the government in dealing with the band whose kidnapping activities have acquired international notoriety.

"Virtually all key sectors have identified the peace and order problem, particularly the Abu Sayyaf, as the main factor that is discouraging local and foreign investors from doing business in the country," Acosta said. *With a report from AFP*

Commission on Elections

Continuing registration of voters ongoing in the City/ Municipal Election offices

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Senate urged to probe . . .

(From page A1)

It was Corpus who headed the probe that began in February and dug up the information on the alleged Lacson and Estrada accounts.

(Another account in a Hong Kong bank reportedly turned up, containing $180 million in the name of Sen. Loi Ejercito, Estrada's wife and, like Lacson, a first-term senator.)

"I'm prepared to brief the senators on what we have gathered about Lacson," Corpus said. "I'm confident that although this involves one of their colleagues, our senators will consider this a matter of national interest."

Estrada and his wife already face a plunder charge before the Sandiganbayan in connection with alleged ill-gotten wealth while he was in office.

Party-list Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales (Akbayan) said the Senate should immediately investigate Lacson and Ejercito.

She said the military intelligence reports implicating the two should be (reason) enough for the Senate to "immediately conduct a *motu propio* investigation."

"Meanwhile, both senators should inhibit themselves from legislative work given the gravity of the charges made against them," she said.

Arrest warrant

Rosales said a warrant of arrest should be issued against Lacson based on his alleged involvement in "organized criminal activities, such as kidnap-for-ransom, drug-trafficking and bank robberies," the purported sources of his million-dollar accounts.

"If the charges are not addressed with dispatch by government authorities, we Filipinos can become hostage to a mafia-type network whose leaders have manipulated their election to the highest echelons of power," she said.

The US State Department has yet to confirm the existence of Lacson's bank accounts in the United States.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez told the INQUIRER in a text message Thursday that the US State Department has not answered the DOJ's query on the existence of the accounts.

"There is no answer yet, no denial or confirmation," Perez's message read.

Yesterday, Perez said he would immediately start a separate investigation into the allegations that Lacson and Estrada amassed nearly $1 billion in foreign banks once Corpus submits his report to the justice department this week.

In a telephone interview, Perez said he believed Corpus was not merely concocting stories against Lacson and Estrada.

"These are serious allegations. I think he would not come up with such accusations if he did not have any evidence to back him up," Perez said.

He admitted that Corpus' allegations were serious enough to merit the immediate attention of the DOJ and the Ombudsman.

The INQUIRER tried to contact Ombudsman Aniano Desierto and Overall Deputy Ombudsman Margarito Gervacio for their comments, to no avail.

Desierto was reportedly resting yesterday following a minor eye operation on Saturday, while Gervacio was in Davao on an official trip.

Perez said he had been informed of the Corpus team's mission to the United States as early as March but did not reveal it so as not to preempt its work.

More evidence

He said Corpus' allegations, if true, would validate the claims of former police agents Mary Ong and Angelo Mawanay, alias Ador, that Lacson was behind the abduction and execution of Chinese businessmen whose families had paid ransom, car theft and the distribution of illegal drugs in the country.

Perez said the allegations would not affect the ongoing investigation into the possible involvement of Lacson in the killing last year of public relations practitioner Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver, Emmanuel Corbito, and the disappearance of casino employee Edgar Bentain, among others.

Perez also pointed out that the plunder trial of Estrada before the Sandiganbayan would not be affected by his alleged involvement in suspected money laundering activities with Lacson.

Prosecution team

Calling Lacson a "very dangerous man," the team of private prosecutors at Estrada's impeachment trial said it was set to prosecute the former police chief for alleged criminal offenses, as well as salting away hundreds of millions of dollars abroad as a result of illegal activities.

"(Lacson) is a very ambitious and dangerous person," said Romeo Capulong, one of two private lawyers who filed the impeachment case against Estrada in October last year.

"We should stop him now, now that we have the goods on-him. We should wake up now. His case is as important as the Estrada plunder case," Capulong said.

Capulong's team yesterday suggested that Lacson take a leave of absence from the Senate to avoid "influencing" an inquiry into his alleged ill-gotten deposits in US, Canadian and Hong Kong banks.

The team is composed of Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo, Arno and Pablito Sanidad, Ramon Gonzales, Amado Valdez, Marie Yuvienco, Eriberto Misa, Dandy Tupaz, Eduardo de los Angeles, Ricardo Nepomuceno and Capulong.

Capulong also urged the government to instigate an investigation of Wells Fargo Bank, Citibank and the Bank of America for allegedly allowing Lacson, his wife and the Estradas to deposit millions of dollars in their branches without verifying their backgrounds.

The accounts were allegedly held at the Citibank branches in Hong Kong, California and New York, BA branches in California, New York and Las Vegas, and the Wells Fargo branch in Washington.

The banks could not invoke the Bank Secrecy Law since the accounts were allegedly maintained using "unusual transactions that aroused suspicions of wrongdoing," he said.

Resign call

Militant groups yesterday threatened to push for Lacson's impeachment if he did not resign immediately.

"Thieves and criminals have no place in the Senate," Sammy Malunes, spokesperson of the labor center Kilusang Mayo Uno, said.

The party-list group Bayan Muna, Plunder Watch, the Ecumenical Movement for Justice and Peace, the Promotion of Church and People's Response, and the Concerned Lawyers for Moral and Effective Leadership asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to order an immediate investigation.

Lacson reportedly held personal and joint accounts with his wife Alice and Estrada amounting to $351,721,964.

His personal accounts alone totaled $211,388,420, while Alice Lacson reportedly had two personal accounts with deposits totaling $40,357,078.

Between the Lacson couple and Estrada, they had a total of $728,500,293 allegedly salted away in 18 savings, checking and time deposits in the United States, Canada and Hong Kong. *With reports from Michael Lim Ubac, Christian V. Esguerra and Cathy C. Yamsuan*

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PILIPINAS PASAPORTE

Klitschko keeps WBO title

LAS VEGAS, Nevada—Wladimir Klitschko retained the lightly regarded World Boxing Organization heavyweight title Saturday, stopping Charles Shufford in the sixth round of their scheduled 12-round bout. Klitschko improved to 37-1 with 34 victories inside the distance, while Shufford suffered his first defeat in 17 fights. *AP*

SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ▨ EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

Runner gets another chance

EDMONTON, Alberta—Suspended Russian runner Olga Yegorova got another chance at a world title Saturday, while overwhelming heptathlon favorite Eunice Barber threw away hers. Yegorova will be allowed to compete in the women's 5,000 meters due to problems with a drug test that had implicated her, according to athletics and Russian officials. *AP*

Blades, Slashers gain MBA semis

By Roy Luarca

LIPA CITY—LBC Batangas kept its poise in the wake of Nueva Ecija's blistering rally and prevailed, 94-83, yesterday to clinch the top spot in the Metropolitan Basketball Association First Phase elimination round at the De La Salle Lipa Sentrum.

The Blades blew a 17-point lead, but held on behind Eddie Laure and Alex Compton to tally their 11th win against three losses and assure them of the hardcourt advantage in their best-of-three semifinals against the winner of the Andok's San Juan-FedEx Laguna knockout game on Wednesday..

Negros exacted revenge over Andok's San Juan, 110-93, in the other game at the University of St. La Salle in Bacolod City to claim second place and likewise gain homecourt advantage over Cebuana Lhuillier in their own semis series.

The Slashers, the Gems and the Knights actually finished with similar 10-4 slates, but the Slashers emerged with the best quotient followed by the Gems and the Knights. Under the tournament format, the No. 4 qualifier has to face the fifth placer in a knockout game.

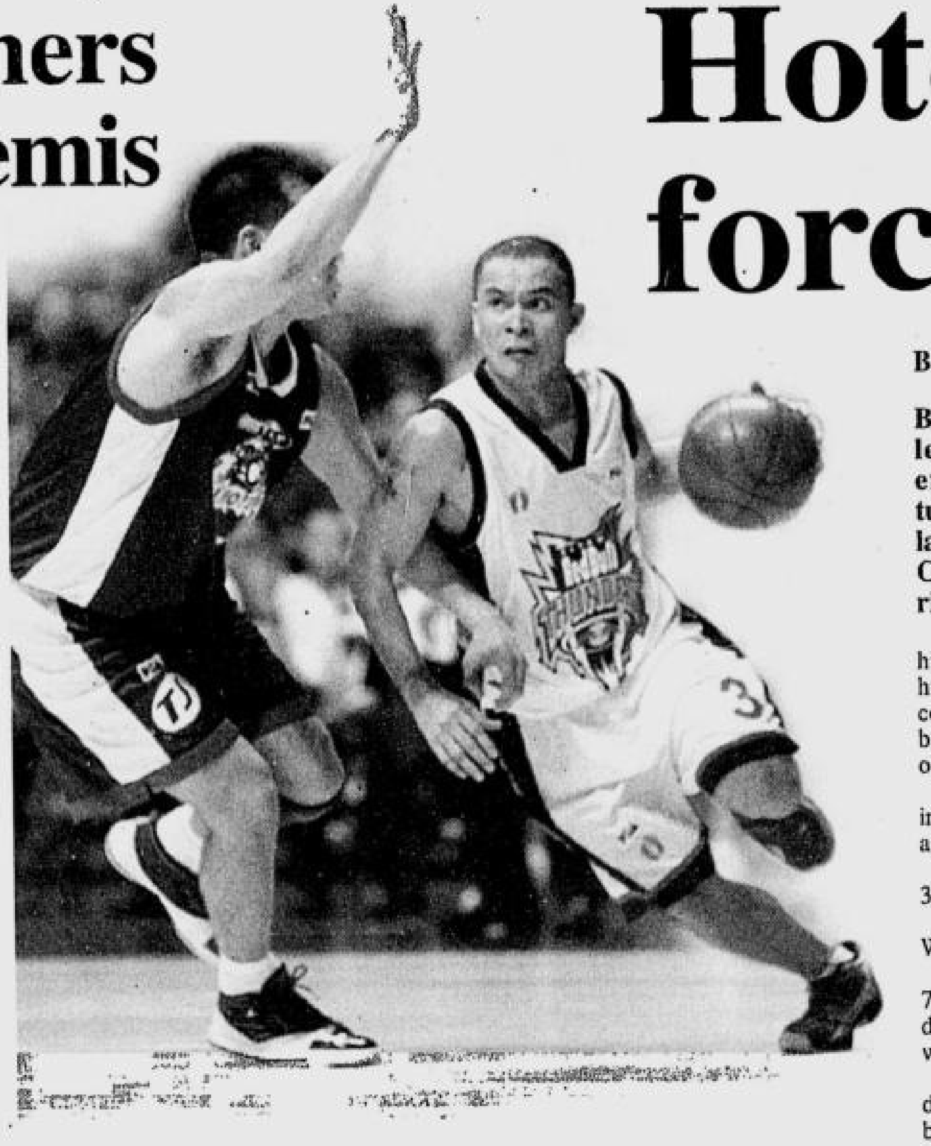
Despite missing the services of injured big men Romel Adducul and Peter Martin, the Blades controlled most part of the penultimate game of the eliminations and were comfortably ahead, 67-50, going to the last two minutes of the third quarter.

The scores:

LBC BATANGAS 94—Compton 20, Laure 19, Antonio 13, Rivera 13, Sanders 11, Corbin 4, Cuevas 4, Espinosa 2, Mapalad 2.

NUEVA ECIJA 83—Aquino 18, J. de Guzman 18, De Guzman 13, Allen 12, Manucat 11, Bautista 5, Bansil 4, Punzalan 2, Makalintal 9, De Guia 0.

Quarters: 21-22, 51-44, 71-57, 94-83.



TORION (right) drives as Alvin Patrimonio defends. ROMY HOMILLADA

Hotdogs, Aces force KO games

By Marc Anthony Reyes

BOYET Fernandez endured a swollen right eye and the grinding endgame pressure as Purefoods turned back Batang Red Bull, 77-75, last night to stay alive in their PBA Commissioner's Cup semifinals series at the Araneta Coliseum.

With his eye partially closed after being hit by Mick Pennisi, Fernandez calmly split his free throws in the final nine seconds to complete the Hotdogs' fourth-quarter comeback that also enabled them to tie the best-of-five series at 2-2.

Alaska Milk also forced a deciding Game 5 in its separate series against San Miguel after a 98-91 overtime win in the other contest.

Kenneth Duremdes scored a career-high 33 points to spearhead the Aces.

The knockout games will be played on Wednesday at the Ynares Center.

Fernandez's free throw gave Purefoods a 77-75 lead which Red Bull failed to surmount despite having posted a 10-point (69-59) lead with eight minutes left in the game.

Jimwell Torion was assigned to hit the last-ditch three-pointer with still six seconds left but Purefoods ganged up on him, forcing the Thunder to go to Kerby Raymundo, who screwed up his drive as time expired.

"We are bloodied and injured," said Purefoods coach Eric Altamiramo. "Right now we are walking wounded, but we played with a lot of heart."

Purefoods import David Wood even played with five fouls at the start of the fourth quarter and Fernandez persevered with just one healthy eye.

Fernandez's split was actually the turning point because after Pennisi (who was thrown out after slamming the ball to his face) went out with less than four minutes left, the momentum shifted to Purefoods.

From 72-all, Woods made a jumper and Rey Evangelista a layup for a 76-72 Purefoods lead with 21.4 seconds remaining. Though Torion hit a three-pointer after that, the Thunder failed to sustain their drive.

Scores:

PUREFOODS 77—Wood 18, Castillo 14, Evangelista 14, Seigle 11, Yee 8, Patrimonio 7, Escobar 2, Feihl 2, Fernandez 1.

RED BULL 75—Lang 22, Harp 16, Tugade 10, Pennisi 6, Raymundo 6, Valenzuela 5, Miller 5, Torion 3, Agustin 2.

Quarters: 19-20, 36-41, 56-58, 77-75.

NCAA TODAY: (Rizal Memorial)
12 nn—Mapua vs San Beda (jrs/srs)
3 p.m.—UPHR vs PCU (jrs/srs)

Delasin ends last

DOROTHY Joy Delasin, starting out as a big favorite after a smashing victory last week, went on a steady dive and wound up dead last in the Weetabix Women's British Open in Sunningdale, England yesterday.

Delasin birdied her first hole in the third round but that was to be her final shot at the crown as the Giant Eagle LPGA Classic back-to-back champ dropped like a log, soaring to her worst score of 83 on nines of 41-42.

That sent her crashlanding from a share of seventh to second to last. She returned to the course in the first flight on Sunday and never got to recover. She turned in a 75 to complete the sudden loss of form.

It was a disappointing end to a glorious run at the crown which proved to be short-lived. In the first round on Thursday, Delasin scored four birdies and an eagle on her first five holes on the way to a 71.

The run continued with a 69 on Friday and Delasin looked every inch a title contender up to that point. *Jong Arcano*

Pernice shows way

CASTLE ROCK, Colorado—Tom Pernice Jr. withstood challenges from some of golf's top players Saturday to maintain his lead after three rounds of The International. Pernice, who carried a 2-point lead into the third round, emerged with a 3-point advantage over Vijay Singh of Fiji entering Sunday's finale. Defending champion Ernie Els of South Africa and Spain's Sergio Garcia also mounted threats, but were unable to unseat the journeyman Pernice. *AP*

Archers, Tamaraws surge ahead

By Dennis Eroa

EVEN when not in its best form, defending champion La Salle proved too much over tailender Adamson, 99-87, for its fifth win in the UAAP men's basketball tournament yesterday at the Loyola gym.

With six Green Archers hitting in double figures, La Salle sustained a flaming start to hand the low-flying Falcons their sixth straight setback and 26th defeat overall since beating the FEU Tamaraws in August 1999.

Later in the day, the title-hungry Tamaraws gored the University of the East Red Warriors, 78-67, forcing a two-way tie for the lead with the Green Archers with 5-1 cards apiece.

Former national youth standout James Zablan played a worthy game for FEU by sinking crucial triples just when the Warriors were starting to make a run in the fourth period. UE dropped to 3-2. "We looked so good out there making all those shots and passes. But defensively, we still have to improve a lot," said La Salle coach Franz Pumaren.

Over at the UST Gym, the defending champion Lady Archers pummeled the Lady Falcons, 76-62, for their fourth straight win. UST evened its record to 2-2 by spanking UE, 58-50. FEU edged Ateneo, 45-41.

Scores:

LA SALLE 99—Cardona 21, Ritualo 17, Wilson 15, Ramos 11, Sharma 11, Cortez 10, Yeo 6, Gavino 5, Villanueva 2, Vainio 1, Sta. Maria 0.

ADAMSON 87—Rolan 20, Abadia 17, Tagupa 12, Mamaclay 10, Capati 8, Yong 8, Taylor 6, Mangulabnan 4, Ferrer 3, Gandarosa 0.

Quarters: 29-16, 49-42, 84-65, 99-87.

Malarayat, Southwoods sparkle

MT. MALARAYAT chalked up its second straight victory at the expense of Tagaytay Highlands even as title-favorite Manila Southwoods and Alabang made rousing debuts at the resumption of the 2001 Federation League in various courses over the weekend.

Fresh from upsetting defending champion Wack Wack in the season-opener last week, Malarayat trashed the Titleist/Footjoy-backed Highlands, 3-1, for the solo lead in Group I.

With top amateurs Angelo Que and Jerome Delariarte in the lineup, Southwoods launched its Group I campaign with a 3-1 demolition of Sta. Elena.

Alabang figured in tightly-contested 3-1 victory over Manila Golf with three of the four matches going no less than 17 holes.

In the other matches, Mimosa-CDC and league newcomer Eastridge recovered from opening-day losses to beat separate rivals. Mimosa scraped past host Forest Hills while Eastridge survived Orchard via similar 2.5-1.5 decisions.

This week's matches will feature Riviera hosting Sta. Elena and Eastridge playing Southwoods in Group I, Wack Wack tackling Mimosa and Highlands facing Forest Hills in Group II while Valley plays Manila Golf and Alabang takes on Canlubang.

Que teamed up with Boy Escano (bestball), Delariarte partnered with Jojo Lee (scramble) and Larry Tojino played with Butch Brodett to provide the needed victories for Southwoods. Jingy Tuason and JV Velasquez averted a sweep with a 4&2 win over Sevi Llao and Ken Onda.

Winning for Alabang were Jun Galindez-Francis Jimenez, Pete Cervantes-Seve Roxas Chua and Vic Guzman-Edwin Arcilla.

Marquee name

NBA NOTES

Henry Liao

THE PACE has quickened two weeks into the NBA free-agent derby that began July 18.

A number of jobs have been secured, mostly by second-timer free agents who opted for a change in scenery.

The only marquee name in the group, Hakeem Olajuwon, also transferred residence in a sing-and-trade arrangement between Houston and Toronto.

Outside of Houston, Olajuwon's employer in his first 17 NBA seasons, at least three teams—including Cleveland and Indiana—publicly expressed their interest in acquiring the 7-foot center from Lagos, Nigeria notwithstanding his advancing age (38) and health problems (a blood clot in Olajuwon's leg threatened his career last season). In the end, though, it was the Raptors who were able to convince the two-time NBA championship star to come aboard and relocate to Canada.

Olajuwon, who was the NBA Finals MVP in 1994 and 1995 while leading the Rockets to their only pair of league championships in franchise history, earned $16.5 million last campaign. He knew he needed to take a paycut in his next—and most likely the last—contract. But the Rockets only wanted to retain Olajuwon if they could fit him under the salary cap.

The Rockets' final offer of a three-year guaranteed renewal worth $13 million was unsatisfactory to Olajuwon, who later accepted the Raptors' offer of their $4.538 million mid-level salary-cap exception and agreed to a three-year, $16.7 million deal that is the maximum Toronto can pay Hakeem under the collective bargaining agreement.

Olajuwon wanted to play for an NBA championship-contending outfit and Toronto fits the bill.

Grand slam

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

MOST fans had figured San Miguel Beer and Batang Red Bull to meet in the finals of the PBA Commissioner's Cup even before the start of their best-of-five semifinal series against Alaska and Purefoods, respectively.

It is also common knowledge that the battle-tested Beerman of coach Jong Uichico are gunning for a grand slam of this season's three conference titles after having earlier won the recent All Filipino Cup. But unbeknownst to many, the never-say-die Thunder are also gunning for a grand slam of another kind, a sweep of three sister teams in the Philippine Basketball Association-Ginebra, Purefoods and San Miguel Beer.

Of course the task is daunting for Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao, but he should be consoled by the fact that the team was able to eliminate crowd favorite Ginebra in the quarterfinals and score stirring victories over Purefoods in the semis.

On record, defending champion San Miguel, banking on power and poise, is the best offensive team in this conference. It is anchoring its bid on import Nate Johnson, the deadly duo of Danny Seigel and Danny Ildefonso, Nick Belasco and Olsen Racela. Also in the star cast are dependable Freddie Abuda, sharp-shooting Boybits Victoria and Dwight Lago, Mike Mustre and Joey Mente.

A member of the PBA since 1975, San Miguel has won 16 conference titles, including five of the league's last six conference championships under coach Uichico, a mean feat by any measure.

On the other hand, newcomer Red bull is looming large as the biggest threat to San Miguel. After only five conference appearances, the Thunder have given the league's oldtimers a run for their money, finishing a surprising third in last year's season-ending Governors' Cup.

"We worked real hard in practice and we played awfully hard to win our games," said coach Yeng Guiao. "This modest achievement is a reflection of a lot of hard work." He added the players are now more focused on their game and although Red Bull is lacking in experience, it has the good fortune of acquiring no-quit import Tony Lang, who provides the mature judgment to the team at the crucial moments. Maturity, it should be noted, is something which the error-prone team needs very badly at present. The team cannot afford to make mistakes because mistakes in a game, however small, are oftentimes costly ones.

Completing the Thunder's bench are peppery Jimwell Torion, fearless Junthy Valenzuela, sweet-shooting Mick Pennisi, defensive gem Davonn Harp, old reliable Ato Agustin, No. 1 draftee Willie Miller and former NCAA standout Kerby Raymundo, aside from vastly-improved Lordy Tugade, Jay Mendoza and Lowell Briones.

WGAP circuit resumes tomorrow at S'woods

THE CALLAWAY-SPONSORED Women's Golf Association of the Philippines (WGAP) Circuit resumes tomorrow with the Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club hosting the fifth leg. Tee-off time is 7 a.m.

Southwoods' active ladies chapter is expected to field in its most potent lineups for the 18-hole tourney at the Legends course.

Prizes donated by Callaway through its exclusive local distributor Electrobus Consolidated Inc. are up for grabs in the team and individual competitions for Classes A, B and C.

The event is a prelude to WGAP's second major offering for the season, the Luzvimin championships on Aug. 22-24 at the Cebu Country Club.

Keen competition have marked the first five legs with no teams dominating any of the three divisions.

Gina Tuason, president of WGAP, said that the battle for the top awards has become tighter since most of the teams are finding ways to field in their strongest combinations.

"I think we have well-trained players especially in Class A but competitions are even tougher in Class B and C," said Tuason. The Molave scoring system is being used for the series.

UST booters enter finals

UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas made sure it will not disappoint its fans by sweeping the XL men's division and barging into the inaugural Lipovitan 4 on 4 soccer campus tour finals recently at the UST covered courts in España.

Handled by former national player Nonoy Carpio, the Growling Tigers blasted FEU A and B, PUP and UP-IS alumni to earn tickets to the national finals slated on Aug. 25-26 at the Powerplant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati City.

The España-based booters thus joined early qualifiers Rizal Technological University and University of the Philippines to the national finals.

Over at Don Bosco Makati, College of St. Benilde registered a twin kill as it barged into the men's and women's finals by dominating their respective groups. Leading the Blazers are Johniel Vapor, Apolinar Arenal, Leofran Bernabe, Adrian Payson, Ejike Collins (men's) and Lori Sumuo, Gela Nachero, Grace O' Connor, Mejie Yamamoto and Betina Espino (women's). Both teams

UST BOOTERS/ A21

MJCI, Tab expand race coverage

THE Manila Jockey Club, Inc. and multi-system integrator TAB Philippines, Inc. have joined hands to expand the coverage of horse racing to a nationwide level.

TAB Philippines initially invested P250 million in equipment and software for the undertaking.

MJCI and Tab Philippines officials said the expansion of the coverage of the sport throughout the country is envisioned to result in the increase in employment in the industry, additional funds for horse owners that can be used to improve and expand breeding operations and the upgrading of operations to the level of other horse racing countries.

The agreement will also result in an increase in the availability of information to the public, including an improvement in the quality of the race broadcast and the addition of a broadcast studio dedicated to racing.

MJCI President Alfonso R. Reyno, Jr. and TAB Philippines, Inc. chief operating officer Tony Young signed the new business partnership last Friday during simple ceremonies at the Turf Room of the Manila Jockey Club.

This joint venture agreement is consistent with the MJCI's vision and commitment to bring the thrill and excitement of horse racing throughout the Philippine archipelago in a bid to popularize the sport, maximizing its vast economic potential," said Reyno.

To achieve the goal of expanding the coverage of horse racing throughout the country, TAB Philippines, Inc. has assembled a dominant new force of major technology providers.

Among the major players in the multi-service consortium formed by TAB Philippines are Australian-based world class gaming and wagering consultancy and technology supplier, Jupiters International; internationally-renowned race broadcast and simulcast provider Sky Channel (Australia), nationwide satellite technology provider Bell Telecom; and Winners' Circle Production, Inc., the country's exclusive broadcast company for horse racing.

Meanwhile, Always Florence edged Bidang Bida to win the first leg of the 2001 Juvenile Colts Championship (Nevada Star Stakes) yesterday at the San Lazaro Hippodrome.

Sharing limelight was Master Ijhay, who ruled the TAB Philippines Cup.

REYNO (seated, second from left) and TAB Philippines Inc. Chair Edgardo Reyes (fourth from left) sign the agreement for the nationwide expansion of MJCI's wagering network. Witnessing the event are Jupiters International Chair Peter Mayne, Australian ambassador to the Philippines Hon. John Buckley, Tony Young, Philtobo president Bienvenido Niles Jr., senior Australian trade commissioner Mark Visser, Philtobo Chair Antonio Lagdameo, Winners' Circle Production Chair and CEO Dante Arevalo, MJCI COO and EVP Roberto Reverente and Marho President Aristeo Puyat.

Table tennis series unfolds next month

BINAY

A SERIES of monthly table tennis tournaments aimed at revitalizing the sport in the country will be held starting September by the newly organized Philippine Table Tennis Development Union.

This was announced recently by Jejomar "Erwin" Binay Jr., PTTDU president, who said that the event is an integral part of a comprehensive program designed to stir up renewed interest for the sport. The PTTDU has likewise lined up regular seminars on coaching to update and upgrade the technical knowledge of local coaches.

Binay added that the organization will likewise conduct an experimental training program for children below 10 years old using innovative coaching and training techniques best suited for the Filipino physique and character.

The launching tournament of Philippine Table Tennis will be the Makati Table Tennis Open which will be held on Sept. 1-2 at the Makati Coliseum.

The six-event tournament will showcase the country's top men, women and junior paddlers who will vie for cash and other prizes.

Other tournaments lined up are four national age-group championships, a team invitational event, the Makati Mayors' Cup, Quezon City Open, Metro Manila Classics, National Interscholastics, Inter-commercial

League and the revival of the table tennis events of the Inter-Department Athletic League (IDEAL) table tennis tournament and the (GCAA).

The 24-year-old Binay Jr., is a member of the Makati City Council. He also heads the City's Youth and Sports council.

Aside from Binay, the PTTDU board also includes: Quezon City Register of Deeds Emmanuel Gemarino, vice president, lawyer Reinerio De Veyra, secretary-treasurer, and Makati councilor Ferdie Eusebio, auditor. Other members of the board include businessman Joseph Young, former national champions Antonio Aguinalde and Julius Esposo, Arnaldo Estacio and former national head coach Philip Pigao, who will also act as interim secretary general.

SPORTSWATCH

Seles vs V. Williams

CARLSBAD, California—Monica Seles dismantled Martina Hingis 6-3, 6-4 in the Acura Classic semifinals Saturday for her first victory over the world's No. 1 player in three years. Seles, the seventh seed, advanced for the second straight year to the final, where she'll play No. 2 Venus Williams in a rematch of last year when Williams won in three sets. Williams faced just three break points on her serve in defeating fourth-seeded Lindsay Davenport 6-2, 7-5. *AP*

Rafter, Pavel advance

MONTREAL—Ninth-seeded Patrick Rafter advanced to the final of the Tennis Masters Series-Canada on Saturday, beating France's Fabrice Santoro 6-2, 6-2. Rafter, playing in his first tournament since losing the Wimbledon final to Goran Ivanisevic, will face Romania's Andrei Pavel in the final. Pavel advanced when Germany's Tommy Haas retired because of back spasms. "I think he's got one of the best backhands in the game. He's a good competitor and he's been serving well," Rafter said of Pavel. *AP*

Armstrong hailed

AUSTIN, Texas—Texans welcomed home three-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong on Saturday with music and tributes in a celebration dubbed "Vive Lance! Austin's Hometown Hero." During the tour, Armstrong mania hit the state's capital city. "Go Lance" signs hung in windows and on buildings and cyclists wore yellow jerseys, like the Tour de France leader. Six days after Armstrong won the tour, the city remained in a festive mood. *AP*

Alabang hosts GC

THE FIRST leg of Governor's Cup will be held on Aug. 7, at the Alabang Golf and Country Club. Tee off time will be from 7 to 9 a.m. The meet will be hosted by Rotary Club of Pasay, Rotary Club of Ermita, Rotary Club of EPZA in honor of Gov. Rudy Estrallado and Rotary International District 3810. The tournament will be shown on SBN 21.

BASEBALL RESULTS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	67	43	.609	—
Boston	62	47	.569	4 1-2
Toronto	52	59	.468	15 1-2
Baltimore	45	66	.405	22 1-2
Tampa Bay	36	73	.330	30 1-2
Central Division				
Minnesota	63	47	.573	—
Cleveland	61	48	.560	1 1-2
Chicago	53	54	.495	8 1-2
Detroit	46	62	.426	16
Kansas City	43	67	.391	20
West Division				
Seattle	80	30	.727	—
Oakland	60	50	.545	20
Anaheim	56	54	.509	24
Texas	49	61	.445	31

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	62	48	.564	—
Philadelphia	60	50	.545	2
Florida	55	55	.500	7
New York	51	60	.460	11 1-2
Montreal	47	64	.423	15 1-2
Central Division				
Chicago	63	46	.578	—
Houston	61	49	.554	2 1-2
St. Louis	56	53	.514	7
Milwaukee	47	61	.435	15 1-2
Cincinnati	45	64	.413	18
Pittsburgh	42	67	.385	21
West Division				
Los Angeles	62	49	.559	—
Arizona	61	49	.554	1-2
San Francisco	61	50	.540	1
San Diego	54	56	.491	7 1-2
Colorado	46	64	.418	15 1-2

COMPLETE RESULTS

American League

N.Y. Yankees 5, Anaheim 4;
Boston 10, Texas 4, 1st game;
Boston 6, Texas 2, 2nd game;
Seattle 6, Cleveland 5;
Toronto 2, Baltimore 1;
Oakland 10, Detroit 1;
Minnesota 8, Kansas City 2;
Chicago White Sox 8, Tampa Bay 6.

National League

Atlanta 14, Milwaukee 2;
N.Y. Mets 4, Arizona 2;
Los Angeles 3, Chicago Cubs 1;
Philadelphia 12, San Francisco 2;
Houston 4, Montreal 1;
Pittsburgh 6, Colorado 3;
St. Louis 3, Florida 0;
San Diego 2, Cincinnati 0. *AP*

UST . . .

(From page A20)

are coached by Ric Eugenio.

Not to be outdone, the UST Tigresses also ruled the Lipovitan IRA girls side by downing FEU, UP, Angelicum and UST B. Leading UST's attack were Ginger Loaria, Joyce Landagan, MK de Villa, Ruby Martin and Tina Villamor.

Roevans Batobalani, Devilow Bayno, Randy Leyble, Rodney Leyble and Kim Versales comprised the winning men's team.

SPORTS ON TV

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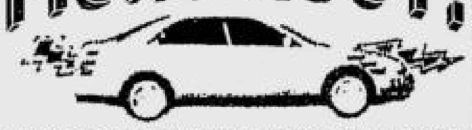
GOLF: Golfglobe 2001 at 10 a.m. (r) on Star Sports
PGA - The International, Final Round at 2 p.m. (r – 10 p.m.) on Star Sports
TENNIS: WTA Bank of the West Classic, Finals at 10:30 a.m. (r) on Star Sports
Masters Series (Montreal), Men's Final at 1:30 p.m. and 8 p.m. (r) (Cincinnati) Early Round Coverage Day #1 tomorrow at 1 a.m. on ESPN
BASEBALL: Sunday Night Baseball at 8 a.m. (r – 10 p.m.) on ESPN
VOLLEYBALL: FIVB Beach Volleyball - Germany Open, Men's Semifinals at midnight on Star Sports
MOTOR SPORTS: Motorsport Asia at 3:30 p.m. (r) on ESPN2001 Porsche Asian Challenge, Rounds Three and Four at 4 p.m. on Star Sports
International Motorsport News 2001 at 6 p.m. on Star Sports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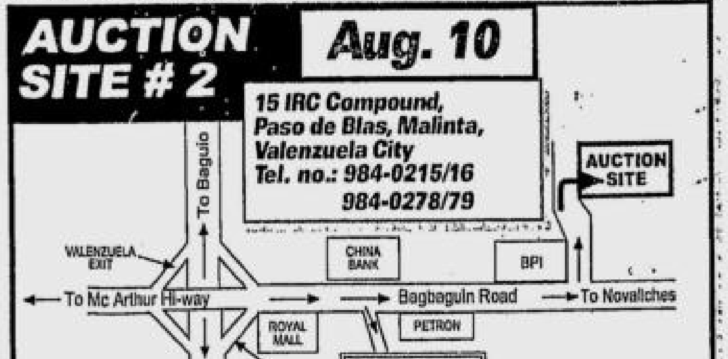

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VNS VENTURES

Newsman denies starting QC fire

'Unidentified men harassing my kin'

By Philip C. Tubeza

FORMER journalist Philip Lustre yesterday denied that he started the fire in a Quezon City apartment that killed six people, including his four nephews and nieces.

"I am innocent, I can never do that, especially to my relatives and the mother of my child," Lustre, his voice choking with tears, said.

Lustre, who is now a media consultant of the Department of Interior and Local Government, presented himself to police and media people in Camp Karingal, Quezon City after his name was linked to Saturday's deadly blaze.

Police have yet to identify Lustre as a suspect as arson investigators said they are expecting a witness to come forward.

The witness might give a formal statement tagging Lustre as the one who started the fire, authorities said.

NEWSMEN DENIES/ A24

5 arrested for killing of EPD officer

By Agnes E. Donato

A WITNESS in the brutal killing of Eastern Police District official P/Insp. Germap Hepuller yesterday surfaced to tell how he witnessed the killing of Hepuller in Taytay, Rizal, as police arrested five suspects.

Edwin Espino, 26, Hepuller's friend and neighbor, came out in the open to testify against the suspects, said Supt. Miguel Marcelo, EPD intelligence division chief.

Murder charges will be filed before the Pasig City Prosecutor's Office against Ricardo Cruz, William Raymundo and Renato Dianala, all of Sitio Bengiad, Barangay San Juan in Taytay, for the slaying of Hepuller, whose body was fished out of a river in Taytay two weeks ago.

On Friday, Edgardo Caruncho, 33, and Carlos Hunio, 25, were also arrested for Hepuller's killing.

All the suspects were arrested during a series of joint operations conducted by the EPD, led by Supt. Gilbert Cruz of the intelligence division, and the Taytay police.

In an interview, Espino said a slightly intoxicated Hepuller went to his house about 2 a.m. of July 24 and invited him to attend a wake in the neighborhood.

Espino said he told Hépuller he would meet him later, as he would first buy a prepaid card for

5 ARRESTED/ A25

WAZZZZUP?
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Cowboy Grill 1190 ARQUEZA ST., MABINI	MUSIC CIRCUIT FAT 16/ARTENSION	NO ENTRANCE FEE 525.1474/525.4269
Cowboy Grill REMEDIOS ST., MALATE	MR. ROXY HERZ	NO ENTRANCE FEE ☎ 521.8143
Cowboy Grill NOVALICHES Q.C.	KNIGHTS J BROTHERS	SOUTHBORDER AUG. 8 250 CONS. F & D
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Newsman denies starting QC fire

(From page A23)

Arson investigators also have to formally identify all of the victims, but Lustre said those who were killed included his "special friend'' Violeta Robles, 25; his cousin Veronica Roxas, and her children Jun-Jun, 11; AC, 6; and 15-year-old twins, Mara and Mira.

"How could I do that to my blood relatives?" Lustre said. "Veronica is like a sister to me since my mother adopted her."

Lustre told the INQUIRER that people who were after Roxas might have been behind the fire.

He said he brought Roxas and her children to Robles' home on Friday night after unidentified men began harassing her.

Roxas and her husband were implicated in the murder of a Korean in Antipolo City last December. But Roxas claimed that they were framed.

He also denied earlier reports that he and Robles fought before the blaze.

"The neighbors did not know the real circumstances of my presence there," he said. "They're speculating about what happened."

Lustre claimed that he left the house about 2 a.m. or almost five hours before the fire started in Robles' two-floor apartment at 54 Malakas St., Barangay Pinyahan, Quezon City.

Police estimated the damage at P2 million.

Lustre said his cousin Roxas and her four children went to see him last Friday at the Lyceum of the Philippines and asked for his help.

He said he was supposed to accompany Roxas to a meeting with Interior Secretary Joey Lina, during one of Lina's public consultations today.

"She was very tense and frightened so I decided to secure her and her family," he said.

Since Robles' apartment was only walking distance from the DILG building on Edsa, he decided to bring Roxas and her children there about midnight, Lustre said.

Lustre, a married man, also admitted that he and Robles had an affair, but claimed it was over and that his family knows about it.

Robles has a daughter by Lustre, who is attending school in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya.

Lustre said the fight the neighbors reported to have heard before the fire was Robles insisting that she go with him when he was about to go out to buy dinner for Roxas and her children.

"She wanted to come with me because she wanted to know what was bothering Veronica," Ilustre said.

He said they bought some barbecue at Ocho Pares on Scout Borromeo then went back to the apartment. "Everything was fine" when Lustre left the apartment about 2 a.m., he said.

He said the LPG tank was placed beside the main door because it was already empty. Policemen were wondering why the LPG tank was found near the door and not beside the stove in the kitchen.

"Veronica and her children were going to stay there for two to three days so they needed a new tank," Lustre said. "If it were full, it would have exploded in the fire."

He said that he learned of the fire about 11 a.m. Saturday while he was at the Lyceum for the editorial exams of the school paper.

His daughter, Lustre said, called him up on the phone and told him about the fire.

"I was devastated," he said. "I did not know what to do. I just cried."

He said he did not go to the apartment because he was afraid of what the neighbors might do to him.

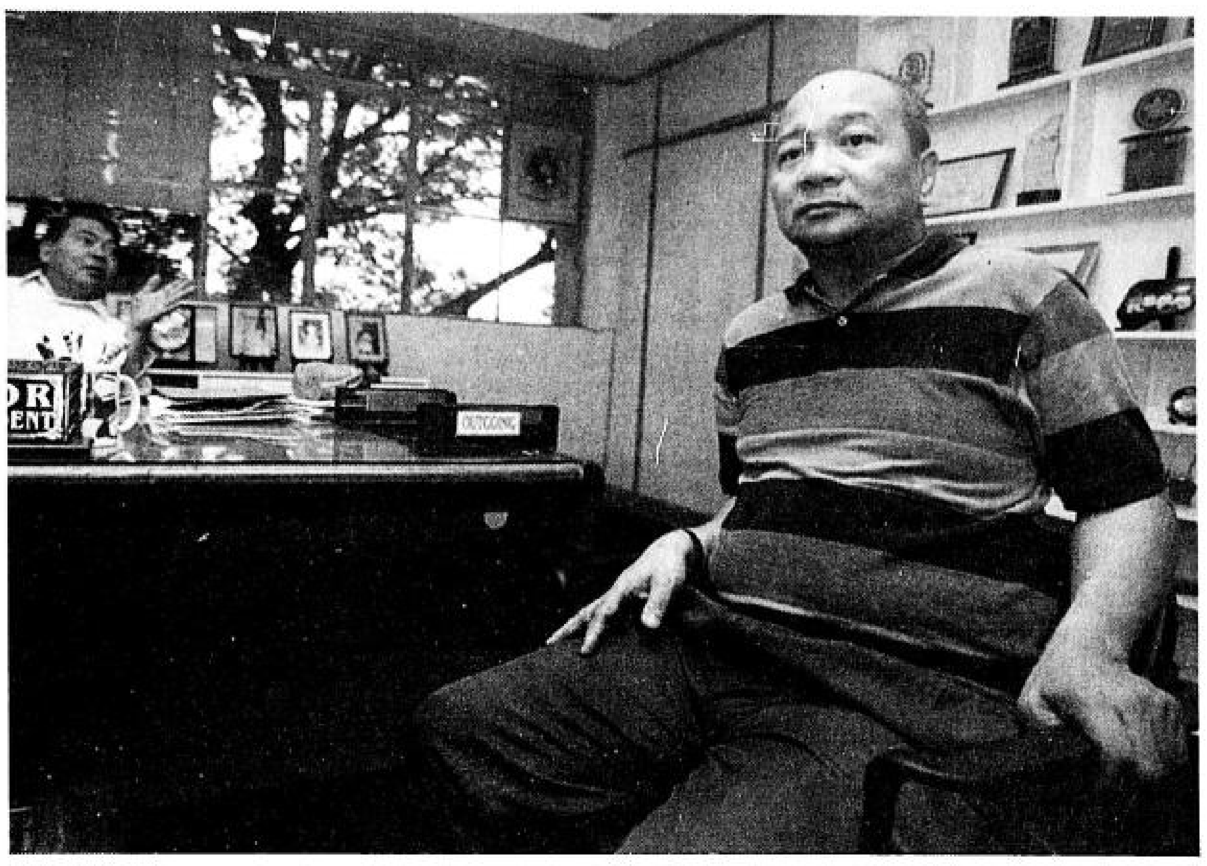
He said he first sought legal counsel from his father, who is a lawyer.

"I wanted to prepare myself and so I went to see my father," he said.

Lustre said that he also prepared to explain his side to his family and Robles' relatives.

Arson investigators are still trying to determine the cause of the blaze.

Insp. Samuel Tadeo said they could only say for certain that the fire started on the first floor.



PHILIP Lustre makes his denial.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Ex-solon's ex wants him to take DNA test

By Agnes E. Donato

A FORMER girlfriend of former Marikina City Rep. Romeo Candazo has asked the court to subject the politician to a DNA test to support her paternity case against him.

Lawyer Ramon Aviado Jr., counsel for Celine Buencamino, said the DNA test would ultimately prove or disprove that Candazo was the father of Buencamino's daughter.

Aviado said he filed the motion asking the court to make Candazo undergo the test as early as last month, but Judge Reuben de la Cruz of the Marikina City Regional Trial Court has yet to decide on it.

A former employee at the House of Representatives, Buencamino claimed that she and Candazo had an affair in 1985 and bore him a child.

The child is now 15.

"The test won't take too long anyway," Aviado said. "In just about six hours, we will know right away if Candazo's DNA pattern were the same as that of the child."

But defense lawyer Kara Singh expressed her disapproval of the petition, saying this could be considered a violation of the principle of self-incrimination.

Singh argued that the burden of proof lies in the prosecution and not in her client. She said the defense had no responsibility to produce evidence for its opponent.

Buencamino sued Candazo last year accusing him of violating a provision of Republic Act 7610 or the Exploitation and Discrimination Act.

In her complaint, Buencamino said Candazo had repeatedly ignored her appeals for financial support for their daughter.

Earlier, Buencamino said she and her daughter had to practically beg Candazo for help with the girl's financial needs.

Candazo has refused to acknowledge that the child was his and maintained that the girl was Buencamino's daughter by her husband, multi-awarded film musical director Dionisio "Nonong" Buencamino. He has refused to confirm or deny his relationship with Buencamino and had urged her earlier to establish the paternity of the child.

He also said he was confident the suit would never prosper and noted that "there is no case of abandonment."

But Buencamino said in her sworn statement that Candazo was the one who drove her to the Lourdes Hospital in Sta. Mesa the day before her caesarian operation. She said he was at the hospital every day of her confinement.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, August 6, 2001
Transfiguration of the Lord

1st Reading:	**Dn 7:9-10, 13-14**
2nd Reading:	**2 P 1:16-19**
Gospel:	**Lk 9:28-36**

Jesus took Peter, John and James and went up the mountain to pray. And while he was praying, the aspect of his face was changed and his clothing became dazzling white. Two men were talking with Jesus: Moses and Elijah. They had just appeared in heavenly glory and were telling him about his departure that had to take place in Jerusalem.

Peter and his companions had fallen asleep, but they awoke suddenly and saw Jesus' Glory and the two men standing with him. As Moses and Elijah were about to leave, Peter said to him, "Master, how good it is for us to be here for we can make three tents, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." For Peter didn't know what to say. And no sooner had he spoken than a cloud appeared and covered them; and the disciples were afraid as they entered the cloud. Then these words came from the cloud, "This is my Son, my Chosen one, listen to him." And after the voice had spoken, Jesus was there alone.

The disciples kept this to theinselves at the time, telling no one of anything they had seen.

Commentary

Jesus appears in today's reading as the Holy One of God who introduces his disciples into the mystery of the Son of Man. Just as Yahweh revealed himself to Moses on mount Sinai so Jesus reveals himself on a mountain to the representatives of the new Israel. The incident is to be understood as a call to participate in the holiness of Jesus. By using the expression 'Chosen', Luke points to the Suffering Servant described in Isaiah 53 as a model for understanding Jesus. The event functions to enlighten the disciples about Jesus' mission in Jerusalem, a mission that will lead to his glory. The glory revealed here is the result of Jesus' obedience to the point of death.

Heavenly Father, teach us the obedience of your Son. Grant that we may share in his suffering and death in order to share in His glory.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (CIVIL PROCEDURE/EVIDENCE)—Opportunity of trial court to observe demeanor of witness—When the decision hinges on the credibility of witnesses and their respective testimonies, the trial court's observations and conclusions deserve great respect and are often accorded finality, unless there appears in the record some fact or circumstance of weight which the lower court may have overlooked, misunderstood or misappreciated and which, if properly considered, would alter the result of the case. The trial judge enjoys the advantage of observing the witness' deportment and manner of testifying. The trial judge, therefore, can better determine if such witness were telling the truth, being in the ideal position to weigh conflicting testimonies. Unless certain facts of substance and value were overlooked which, if considered, might affect the result of the case, its assessment must be respected for it had the opportunity to observe the conduct and demeanor of the witnesses while testifying and to detect if they are lying. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Ynares-Santiago, First Division, People v. Belga, G.R. No. 129769, Jan. 19, 2001]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

Ex-mayor, MMDA could be a win-win team

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

(OLD FAVORITE: Whatever happened to the *barong-barong*, the poor man's castle that has been romanticized by some of our name artists? A lot, says premier photographer Ed Santiago. It has not only multiplied like summer flies, its form and built have changed, just like the severely deteriorated lives of countless squatter families in the metropolis. Santiago, often dubbed The Dean by the new crop of lensmen here, has mounted choice frames of the *barong-barong* which will be displayed starting today at the Alcob Hall of the Filipinas Heritage Library in Makati. Ribbon will be cut today at 6 p.m. with Santiago's fans and old friends expected to attend and again marvel at the heartwarming blend of technique and sensibility in the works of the veteran, multi-awarded photojournalist.)

* * *

METRO Manila would've not been trapped in this filthy, stinking hole if Erap Estrada had not been deposed. I bet you don't know that, the beer guzzler told fellow drinkers in Lipa City on Saturday.

He stood up waiting for a reply.

No, I answered, from what I know, we would have all been swimming in deeper filth by now had there been no change in national leadership.

Come on, he protested, you're being unkind to an old friend.

Of course, GMA has not herself done anything remarkable to save Metro Manila from the perennial stink.

You're right, but Erap had big plans for Metro Manila, explained the excited speaker.

All I remember, I said, is that Erap once even wielded the street sweeper's long broom and pretended to clean up a public toilet in a call for the citizenry to tidy up their surroundings.

I know, the beer man exclaimed, but Erap would not have done the cleaning by himself. Actually, he was about to appoint somebody who could've made the whole of Metro Manila clean and livable again.

You believe there's such a miracle man in the country today?

* * *

The beer guzzler shook his head.

No, I don't mean Ben Abalos, he continued. GMA's poor choice as head of the Metro Manila Development Authority has made things even worse.

So who?

The former mayor of Marikina, Bayani Fernando. He has done wonders in his town. He was just waiting to be sworn in as MMDA chief to replace Jojo Binay when Erap suddenly lost grip of the presidency.

Of course, I've heard a lot about Mayor Fernando, I said, they did not like his management style; a lot of people hated his guts when he first assumed office and started to introduce drastic changes. They laughed at him, other people cursed him but he ended up a legend for his strong, sound management.

So where's Bayani Fernando now, what's he doing?

He's an engineer, said our friendly San Mig devotee, he's quietly eking out a living. At least, his wife has succeeded him as mayor, one proof that Marikina really loved what the husband has achieved.

* * *

It's actually hard to overlook what Fernando has done for Marikina.

For one, I had seen for myself the miracle in the Marikina Riverbank Project, where he converted a wasteland into a promenade and commercial center, a people's place. He offered hope, and gave constituents something to applaud.

He's trying to perfect for the metro market an inexpensive, nonstink portable toilet system, the beer-fueled speaker said. It would work wonders if this is adopted in various cities.

But Metro Manila is not just another stinking toilet, I said. We, you and I, all of us, are hopelessly trapped in one monstrous, rotten mess. It's not just one small stinking toilet waiting to be flushed.

Well, for one, Bayani Fernando had plans to transport Metro garbage to a safe destination using the existing railway system. He said all he would've needed was another five kilometers of rail tracks to the dumpsite.

What difference would have it made? I asked.

Simple. There would be fewer of those gory garbage trucks that continue to mess up traffic all over the place. The collection and transport of garbage would've been smoother, most systematic. He has plans of providing garbage collectors uniforms, to give them dignity. The trucks themselves would be upgraded.

* * *

The speaker, handed his third straight ice-cold beer, proceeded to tick off what might've been had Erap Estrada not been deposed.

There would have been a decent and workable traffic system, he explained. A lot of people would get hurt, but Fernando's plans are quite viable.

Fernando could be a genius, I said, but maybe what we really need is a dictator to change the rotten system out in the streets.

No, it's not really that impossible, all I wanted to say is that the MMDA, a very vital agency, can still be saved, but it could be useful and effective only if it's run and managed properly, minus the big talk and posturing.

You're really convinced Bayani Fernando could've been the solution? How come it seems the Macapagal government has not heard of the man?

Because he's branded an Erap loyalist.

Only that?

He could also make a good, firm, no-nonsense president.

Remove Edsa ad posters — Abalos

By Nelson F. Flores

METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. ordered the immediate removal of all advertisement posters on the traffic island along the length of Epifanio De los Santos Avenue (Edsa), including those attached to Metro Rail Transit posts, despite the protests of the Metro Rail Transit Development Council.

Abalos said Presidential Decree No. 1096 or the National Building Code of the Philippines, as well as Metro Manila Council Memorandum Circular No. 88-09, and MMDA Resolution 96-009 prohibit the posting of signs, billboards and other forms of advertisements along the center islands of Edsa.

He stressed that all three laws maintain that the signs should not be posted where they would obstruct the view or distract motorists.

Abalos denied that he ordered a stoppage of the removal of billboards but he admitted that the number of the billboards grew. He said his new order would be implemented to the letter.

Soon after he announced a few months ago that he would remove all posters and billboards along Edsa, the MRTDC threatened to sue the MMDA, calling Abalos' order unlawful.

The MRTDC cited three provisions of the build-lease-transfer (BLT) contract of the MRT-3 project, which addressed the issue of the advertisements.

Paul Daza, MRTDC senior vice president, said the contract basically allows the council to post advertisements in MRT-3 depots, the air space above the stations and the LRTS Phase I.

He added that the contract specifically gives the firm the authority to look for other ways to make profit from the project, apart from the revenue generated from the operation of the trains.

But Abalos said the BLT contract is subject to existing applicable national and local laws, ordinances, rules and regulations.

Lawyer falls for 'salisi'

A FORMER official of the Bureau of Immigration failed to escape the hands of a "salisi" gang in Mandaluyong City Friday night.

Lawyer Josue San Pedro lost his mobile phone and other personal belongings to three men who came to his office around 6 p.m. Friday.

Police said the men went to San Pedro's law office at the San Pedro building on San Pedro Street purportedly to solicit funds for a basketball tournament in the city.

San Pedro, who was working late, entertained them and agreed to give them something for the tournament.

When he turned to get some money, the three grabbed his green clutch bag containing a Nextel radiophone, eyeglasses, organizer and the passport of a client named Mr. Ahn.

Police said the three men are still at large. ***Blanche S. Rivera***

HELPING HAND

The Philippine Jaycee Senate, headed by its president, JCI Sen. John A. Bautista, VP for Luzon Mon Villarama, SG Philip Briones, in cooperation with JCI Sen. James Erwin A. Moran and JC Sheldon Villanueva of Tabaco Jaycees Inc., launched its "Abot Kamay" project for the victims of the latest Mayon Volcano eruptions. Bautista held a fund-raising dinner on his birthday on June 28 to solicit donations for the Mayon victims.

GMA has no trash policy, say senators

METRO Manila could continue to go under water in the years to come because of the Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo administration's "lack of a garbage policy," according to two senators.

Sen. Edgardo Angara and Sen. Robert S. Jaworski yesterday lamented that President Macapagal has so far failed to declare her administration's policy on garbage.

Angara said "garbage has national implications. It is a pivotal issue like globalization. Unfortunately, the administration has not taken initiatives to provide a solution to the problem."

He said the previous administration had identified an alternative site as landfill and dumpsite, but the project was not implemented as the term of President Joseph Estrada was cut short by "Edsa II."

Environmental experts said the government would have a hard time containing flooding in Metro Manila without a garbage policy, he said.

He noted that because of the lack of alternative dumpsites, Metro Manila residents tend to dump their garbage in the streets, esteros and rivers. As a result, the waterways and the drainage system are clogged.

Justice first before ROTC reforms, says slain cadet's dad

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE FATHER of slain Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) cadet Mark Welson Chua yesterday asked the military to give swift justice to his son before instituting reforms in the military training program.

"It's ironic that you propose reforms in a corrupt program like ROTC, but you can't even give swift justice to my son," Welson Chua told the INQUIRER.

During yesterday's meeting with Army chief Maj. Jaime de los Santos, Chua asked military officers to help the National Bureau of Investigation arrest the mastermind of his son's killing.

He said some military officials might be reluctant to go after the mastermind since he could be their peer at the Philippine Military Academy.

Mark was 19 and an Engineering student at the University of Sto. Tomas when he was abducted and killed last March after he exposed alleged anomalies in his school's ROTC program. His complaint resulted in the relief of commandant, Army Maj. Demy Tejares, and his staff.

His death triggered a nationwide uproar among ROTC cadets, calling for the abolition of the student military program.

But the older Chua yesterday criticized militant student groups for concentrating on ROTC's abolition, instead of pushing for justice for his son.

"They should not be selfish," he said. "They should not forget that it was Mark who started it all. Justice for my son should be as important to them as the call for (ROTC's) abolition."

Chua also requested the military yesterday to support "Bantay ROTC," a volunteer organization he is planning to form to investigate alleged irregularities in the student military program.

The group, Chua said, would have 15 directors representing the Church and media, the Commission on Human Rights, and colleges and universities in Metro Manila.

Aside from Bantay ROTC, Chua also proposed to hold ROTC training for one summer only to "minimize if not eradicate corruption in the program."

At present, the entire ROTC course takes four semesters.

Chua is pushing for the reformation, not the abolition, of the campus military program since his late son "loved it so much that he wanted to clean it up."

Prison population increasing

BUREAU of Jail Management and Penology officer in charge Chief Supt. Arturo W. Alit has directed the bureau's assistant regional directors to redouble efforts to decongest BJMP jails.

Alit said that the average monthly population in June has risen to 36,200.

If the trend continues, Alit said the jail population could reach 37,000 before the end of the year.

The National Capital Region registered 12,206 inmates in June, the biggest number so far. Region 4 has the second biggest number, with 4,672, followed by Region 7 with 3,609 and Region 3 with 2,431.

A total of 1,734 inmates are minor, and 667 are insular prisoners or those who have been sentenced for three years and above and due for transfer to the Bureau of Corrections.

Alit exhorted the bureau's 17 assistant regional directors to work harder to decongest jails under their jurisdiction through the expansion of para-legal services, which is the fastest and most effective means to decongest jails.

Construction of more jails is a sure way of preventing overcrowding, Alit said. But the present financial state of the government makes it difficult to build more jails now, he said.

Under an existing memorandum of agreement with the public Attorney's Office (PAO), the Parole and Probation Board (PPB) and the Board of Pardons and Parole (BPP), Alit said that the bureau's assistant regional directors could coordinate with them also securing the release of prisoners pending trial.

Alit said statistics show that 85 percent of overcrowding in jails is mainly attributed to the inability of inmates to post bail or avail themselves of legal assistance while awaiting or undergoing trial.

The prisoners' inability to seek early release through probation, parole or executive clemency is another reason for the overcrowding in jails.

Ato's 43-year love affair with big bikes

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

TALES OF THE CITY

THERE is no engine that Nestor Soriano cannot fix. Be it a car, a generator or even a lawnmower, he can make it come to life.

But the 63-year-old engine wizard became well-known for fixing motorcycles, from old English bikes to the expensive BMW and Harley Davidson machines. Many biking aficionados entrust the repair and maintenance of their machines to "Ato," who has been fixing engines since 1958 when he was just 20 years old.

"My father loved engines and I grew up around him and his cars," Soriano recalls. "I realized later on that I did not like people helping me fix engines. Since you really need helpers to fix a car, I shifted to motorcycles."

At the start, he learned enough to earn money to buy cigarettes or *merienda*. Through experience, love of his work and a genuine interest in motorcycles, he grew into an expert.

He had a small group of clients but their number grew dramatically when he became a motorcycle racer and drove his motorcycle first to the finish line against bigger and newer motorcycles.

"People then started to ask who I was and when they learned that I fixed motorcycles, people started coming to me," he says.

Americans from the former US military base at Sangley Point in Cavite were among his first clients, along with rich Filipinos from Bacolod who rode English bikes and BMWs.

Working, studying

"My clients from the Visayas gave me my nickname," he says. "My friends used to call me Nes or Tor."

Their patronage encouraged him to put up his own repair shop in 1962 at the corner of Buendia and Taft avenues.

He applied what he learned but he later decided to take up a related course at Feati University. He said this helped him answer many questions that his clients asked him.

He started working when he was just in high school because he was envious of his classmates who were working and studying at the same time. He wanted to be like them and have money in his pocket. He ended up just working, and he put studying aside until he went to Feati to take up a vocational course.

"I studied for a year and it really helped me learn more about the engines I was fixing. I was one of the topnotchers in that class, and sometimes, when the teacher was absent, I would be asked to conduct the class."

He stuck to old English bikes like Triumph, BSA, Ariel and Norton from 1958 to 1964. He later turned to repairing BMW bikes which he always admired and yearned for, and he became a master at it.

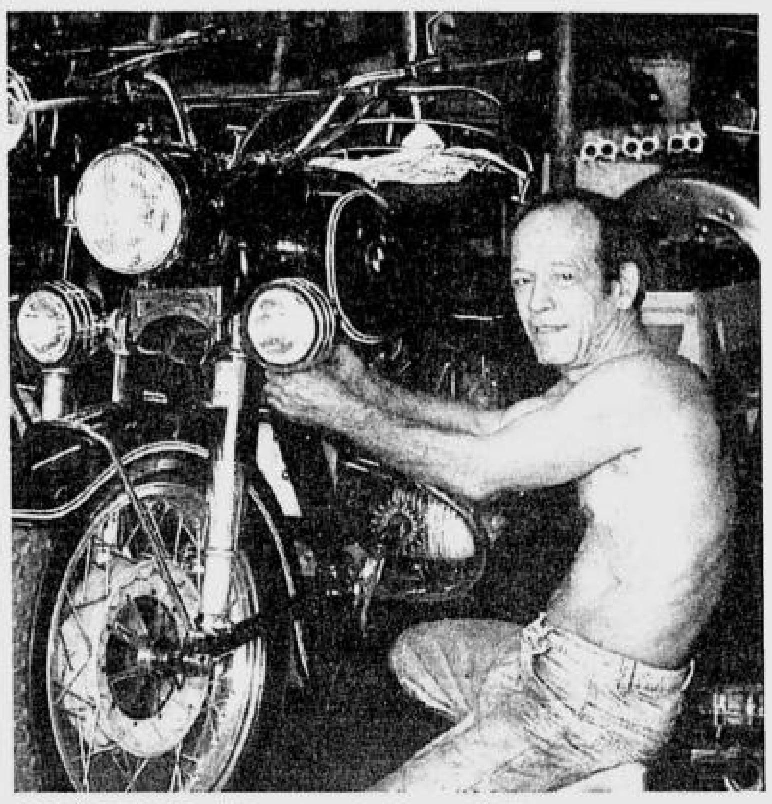
Today, many motorcycle owners have him fetched from his shop along Faraday Street in San Isidro, Makati and brought to their province to fix their bikes.

Falling in love

"I was just 15 years old when I fell in love with the BMW motorcycle," Soriano says. "I like it very much because it is a very practical bike. It is very sturdy and versatile. You can use it to race or for cruising."

As word about the quality of his work on engines spread in the biking community, Soriano was able to buy his own BMW bike, put his children through school and put food on the table.

"Everything I have came from my shop. It has been a long time but I still love doing it. I am 63 years old but I feel very young.



ATO ŚORIANO. "It's not work, it's my life." ROGER MARGALLO

"I keep in shape. Many are surprised that I can still singlehandedly lift a heavy motorcycle engine and put it on the bike."

In his younger days, Soriano was a dedicated body builder, swimmer, boxer and weightlifter. He remains careful with his diet, preferring seafood and vegetables to pork, chicken and beef. He can still read without eyeglasses and he can keep up with younger workers.

Son also a master

"It is not like work to me, it is my life. Sometimes I would get up at 4 in the morning and start working. I don't mind because my body looks for it. I feel weak and lonely when I am not working on an engine and don't have grease on my hands."

His son Ace took after him and has also become quite a master at repairing motorcycles like the Harley Davidson but the elder Soriano still wants to work alone.

"Even now I don't like working with other people because it distracts me. If I do the repair myself then I know what to do with the bike the next time it comes to the shop. There is fulfillment for me when I am able to fix a bike and keep my customers satisfied."

He attributes his success to hard work and determination and to keeping himself abreast with the latest motorcycle models and technology.

Customers as PRs

He reads motorcycle magazines and books to know about the latest in engines. It is only through continuous learning, he says, that he can remain among the best in the industry.

"Other mechanics do well at the start but the quality suffers after about five years because they no longer work, they just leave it all up to the helpers. I am not like that because I still do the work myself."

His many satisfied customers, he says, are his own public relations people. They encourage other bikers to go to his shop.

One of his biggest clients is Freddie Panicucci, owner of the Linea Italia retail group, whose seven Harley Davidsons he maintains and repairs.

With Soriano past middle age, he encourages others to be motorcyle experts, too, but he admits that the skill cannot be merely taught.

"Maybe you can teach them the fundamentals or the science but not the passion," says the motorcycle man. "You should love what you're doing. I do."

Man shoots neighbor over toy gun joke

By Philip C. Tubeza

NEVER belittle a man who brags about his gun, even if it's just a toy gun.

Raul 'Reli Deunaldo, 27, of Kaibigan Street, Kalayaan B in Barangay Batasan Hills, Quezon City, was shot dead allegedly by his neighbor Benjie Valdez, after he joked that the latter had only a plastic toy gun.

Enraged, Valdez pulled out a real handgun and shot Deunaldo until the latter fell dead, according to the investigator, SPO1 Ramon Fernandez of the Central Police District-Criminal Investigation Unit.

SPO1 Fernandez said Valdez went around his neighborhood around 11 p.m. Saturday bragging about his new found "toy."

Valdez allegedly pointed out to his neighbors that he had a new gun and wanted them to see it.

Curious, Deunaldo approached Valdez.

But when he got hold of the gun and examined it, he joked out loud that it was made of plastic, the investigator said.

Unfortunately for Deunaldo, he threw the gun to emphasize that it was not worth Valdez's bluster.

This embarrassed and enraged Valdez, who went home. Minutes later, he reappeared with the real thing, a handgun of unknown caliber.

Fernandez said Valdez approached Deunaldo and shot him in the right chest.

The suspect then escaped.

Valdez's neighbors brought Deunaldo to the East Avenue Medical Center, where doctors declared the victim dead around 11:30 p.m.

Police are getting the statements of witnesses and the description of the suspect, who is now being hunted, Fernandez said.

Hospital Week offers free services

IN OBSERVANCE of the National Hospital Week, Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit announced that free health services would be given to the public nationwide in selected Department of Health (DOH) hospitals.

Dayrit said the celebration, with the theme "Ospital: Kabalikat sa Kalusugan Tungo sa Paghilom ng Bayan," will showcase hospitals as "centers for wellness."

"Today's hospitals have gone beyond the conventional idea as a place of last resort, where people with serious illnesses are brought for treatment," Dayrit said. He said hospitals now do not only offer curative and rehabilitative services but also preventive health services and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle.

Among the free services are pap smear, breast examination, digital rectal examination, tubal ligation, vasectomy and eye refraction.

Quezon City residents can get free medical services at Quirino Memorial Medical Center and at East Avenue Medical Center. Manilans can go to all DOH hospitals in the city.

All regional medical centers outside Metro Manila will also offer similar health services.

A health fair consisting of 50 to 60 booths was set up at the SM Megatrade Hall from Aug. 3 to 5 will provide free services.

Various hospitals will also put up exhibits featuring their major services.

Today, the NCR Group will hold a wreath laying ceremony honoring Dr. Jose Rizal and Dr. Sixto Y. Orosa, author of the Provincial Hospital Law which established the Philippine hospital system.

Dayrit will participate at a cornerstone-laying at the Davao Medical Center and will visit the nearly completed new building of the Lung Center of the Philippines. Dayrit said the celebration will also involve all private hospitals.

NBI clearances in just 1 day

GEN. Reynaldo Wycoco, director of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), announced that an improved computer system now allows the release of NBI clearances in just one day, on the same day the applications are made.

The enhanced procedure is an extension of the existing clearance system implemented by Mega Data Corp. for the NBI.

The system was made available first at the NBI head office. Later it will be available in NBI offices in Cebu, Davao, Batangas, Naga, Baguio, Cotabato, Dagupan, Cagayan de Oro, Zamboanga and Iloilo.

By the end of August, the improved NBI clearance will be implemented in all NBI offices nationwide.

To reduce the large number of applicants at the NBI head office, clearance renewal kiosks will be installed in city and municipal halls in Metro Manila area to service all Metro Manila renewal clearance applicants.

Clearances applied for at these kiosks will be released in a matter of minutes for as long as the applicant brings his old clearance or has an NBI clearance renewal ID, according to Wycoco.

Soon, the NBI Internet website will be available for posting of the Top 10 Most Wanted Criminals, he said. The public can contribute information and leads to help solve crimes, he added.

Mercury robbed

SEVEN heavily armed men on Saturday night broke into a Manila drugstore chain branch and stole an undetermined amount of cash and valuables, police said.

Armed with rifles, the suspects barged into the Mercury drugstore at the corner of Metrica and España streets about 8:30 p.m., said SPO4 Renato Romero of the Western Police District Station 4.

The suspects fired shots inside the drugstore and ordered customers and employees to lie face-down on the floor while they took money from the cash register, Mercury assistant manager Recila Magdaong told investigators.

The robbers also took the cash and valuables of customers and employees before they drove toward Quezon City on board a Mazda double-cab (WAX-937), police said. *Christian V. Esguerra*

Share your blood, save a loved one

By Louie Heredia

A YEAR ago, Mrs. Sonia Arellano of The Philippine Heart Center contacted me to sing a couple of songs for their bloodletting project in malls.

The project came at a very meaningful time since my stepfather had just gone through a double bypass and had needed blood. Our household driver for many years offered his blood. Our driver thus had a vital role in saving my stepfather's life.

At the start, I treated this mall tour just like any other mall tours, considering that I have been doing shows like these for the past 16 years of my singing career. At the same time, I took for granted the many shoppers and mall lovers who stopped to hear me sing and eventually offered their blood.

I suddenly realized that the Lord put me in this position for a good reason—to be able to convince my fellow Filipinos that a single donation of blood can actually save many lives.

Last year, in just four bloodletting mall shows, we were able to attract almost 300 blood donors who, some of them may not ever know, have helped save other people's lives.

Last June, I again received a call from Mrs. Arellano who told me they were considering me to be the official endorser of their bloodletting project, whose slogan is "*Sali Na Sa* Life-Giving Team!"

The fact that I was being considered was already a privilege. I left it in the hands of God if I would be chosen.

Just a couple of weeks later I received the good news. But this time, being an endorser meant not only convincing people to donate blood but actually donating blood myself.

HEREDIA sings for blood at Robinson's Place.

Heredia joins the staff of the QCSC and the Department of Health Blood Program in a blood-letting at Robinson's Place.

In the afternoon of July 19, friends from different health institutions, doctors, nurses, volunteer workers and fellow celebrities got together at The Robinson's Place in Manila for the official launch of the bloodletting project for 2001.

The event was a success with almost 120 blood donors participating. It was pleasing to see young professionals, students, minimum-wage earners and even the mall's security guards getting together as one to help save lives by donating blood.

I was among the donors. Although I must admit I was nervous and was scared by the sight of the big syringe and of blood, deep inside, my heart was pounding with joy because I knew that I was helping save four lives with just a single donation.

The whole exercise didn't take much of my time. It was as simple as having the courage to say "Yes," allowing a tiny blood sample to be taken to identify your blood type, and lying down in a comfortable bed for a few minutes to allow "Dracula" to suck your blood, with no pain at all.

It didn't take days or weeks to recuperate—all it took was another 10 minutes of relaxation while enjoying a chicken sandwich and an ice-cold cola. Remember, we have five liters of blood in our body and four lives are asking for only 450 ml of that blood. In less than half an hour, I was up and bout.

Each day, there are 100 patients in the country who need blood. They have dengue fever, cancer, leukemia, anemia, heart and kidney ailments and bleeding disorders following surgery.

Rich or poor, young and old, Chinese or Filipino: There are no distinctions for patients who need blood.

I challenge you this very moment to take that extra step and share your blood. The person you'll be saving could be your loved one.

5 arrested for killing of EPD officer

(From page A23)

his cellular phone.

Espino said that on his way to meet Hepuller, he saw four men on board a tricycle block the path of the lawman.

He said Cruz alighted from the vehicle and hit Hepuller with a wooden bar or a lead pipe once in the back of the head.

Another man helped Cruz drag Hepuller into the tricycle, Espino said. They then drove off to a guardhouse near the Floodway area.

Espino said he followed the group to the guardhouse. He told police that he witnessed Hepuller's killing.

"I saw them drag his body into the guardhouse," he said. "Then I heard him asking the man, 'What did I do to you? Why are you doing this to me?'"

He said he then heard a gunshot coming from the guardhouse.

About 30 minutes later, Espino said, he saw the four men carrying out a box, which was too small to fit in Hepuller that his feet were showing.

The men then hurled the box into the nearby river, he said.

Espino said Cruz saw him when the group was about to leave the area.

"Cruz came to see me the next morning in my house," Espino said. "He confronted me and at gunpoint threatened to kill me if I wouldn't keep my mouth shut."

He told police that the gun Cruz pointed at him was a nickel-plated .9mm pistol, which belonged to Hepuller.

Espino said Cruz was a known drug pusher in the neighborhood.

Hepuller's body was found floating in the river four days after he went missing on July 24.

His wife told police that he left their house at Crestaville II Subdivision in Barangay San Juan, Taytay, Rizal for the last time after midnight that night to buy milk for their daughter.

When he was fished out of the river, Hepuller's hands and feet were bound, police said, and he also had bruises and two stab wounds in the face and body.

Police said Hepuller's genitals had been cut off and his stomach was emptied of its internal organs.

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SM CITY FAIRVIEW
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12	DR. DOLITTLE 2

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3	RED DIARIES
4	CATS & DOGS

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7	JURASSIC PARK 3
8	KISS OF THE DRAGON
9	DR. DOLITTLE 2
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11	FINAL FANTASY
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8	JURASSIC PARK 3
9	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
10	TURN ON

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6	RED DIARIES

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3	MOULIN ROUGE THX In DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4	THE TAO OF STEVE (Phil. Premiere) Art Film In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5	RED DIARIES In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
6	KISS OF THE DRAGON In DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
7	CATS & DOGS In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

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5 GOLD (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
6 GOLD (SDDS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
8 [illegible]	RED DIARIES
9 [illegible]	CATS & DOGS
10 [illegible]	CATS & DOGS

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
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1	
2	
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5	
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Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3
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2 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	RED DIARIES

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3	CATS & DOGS

starmall Movies
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1	JURASSIC PARK 3
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4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
5	PARU PARONG LIGAW

Metropolis
(Alabang) tel 543.4001

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE
3	RED DIARIES
4	TURN ON
5	CATS & DOGS
6	JURASSIC PARK 3
7	KISS OF THE DRAGON
8	NAG AAPOY NA LANGIT

LOUIE'S CINEMA THX
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2	ALONG CAME A SPIDER

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2	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	KISS OF THE DRAGON

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(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

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Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	REPLICANT
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3	JURASSIC PARK 3
4	RED DIARIES

GOTESCO CINEMA

City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (DOLBY)	RED DIARIES
2	RESERVED
3	RESERVED
4	RESERVED
5	CATS & DOGS
6	MOULIN ROUGE
7 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
8 (SDDS)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
9 (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON

Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	RED DIARIES

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	RED DIARIES
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3	CATS & DOGS
4 (SDDS)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
5	MOULIN ROUGE
6 (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
7 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
8	RESERVE
9	RESERVE

Commonwealth
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2	RED DIARIES
3	KISS OF THE DRAGON
4	RESERVE
5 (SDDS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
6	CATS & DOGS
7 (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
8	RESERVE

Ortigas
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2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
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1	KISS OF THE DRAGON

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1	RED DIARIES

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2	JURASSIC PARK III
3	CATS & DOGS
4	RED DIARIES

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3	JURASSIC PARK 3

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
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1 (DOLBY)	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	RED DIARIES
3	INDECENT PROFESSOR
4	KISS OF THE DRAGON
5	CATS & DOGS

New Divisoria Mall
DIVISORIA CINEMA
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1	RED DIARIES
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3	CATS & DOGS
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6	INDECENT PROFESSOR

Baclaran LRT
LRT CINEMA
tel 512.0115

1 (DOLBY)	RED DIARIES
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3	JURASSIC PARK 3

Berma
tel 879-2029 or 30

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	RESERVE
3	RED DIARIES
4	KISS OF THE DRAGON

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
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1	RED DIARIES
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	MOULIN ROUGE
2 (DTS)	RED DIARIES
3 (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
4	JURASSIC PARK 3

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) Tel. (049) 411-1146

1	RED DIARIES
2 (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3 (DTS)	MOULIN ROUGE
4	JURASSIC PARK 3

Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	DR. DOLITTLE 2
2	ATLANTIS
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	SOON TO OPEN

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	INDECENT PROFESSOR
3	RED DIARIES
4 (DTS)	KISS OF THE DRAGON

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
2	RED DIARIES
3 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
4	MOULIN ROUGE
5	UNANG TIBOK

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	KISS OF THE DRAGON
2	RED DIARIES
3	MOULIN ROUGE

Olivarez Los Baños
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1	KISS OF THE DRAGON
2	RED DIARIES
3	MOULIN ROUGE

Olivarez Tagaytay
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2	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	PARU PARONG LIGAW

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3	RED DIARIES

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	RED DIARIES
2 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	RED DIARIES

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	RED DIARIES
2	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	DR. DOLITTLE 2
3	TOM CATS
4	NAG AAPOY NA LANGIT

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

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5	JURASSIC PARK 3
6	KISS OF THE DRAGON
7	JURASSIC PARK 3
8	RED DIARIES
9	MOULIN ROUGE
10	CATS & DOGS

ERMITA
536-7809 TO 12

1.	KISS OF THE DRAGON
2	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	MOULIN ROUGE
4	FINDING FORRESTER
5	RED DIARIES
6	CATS & DOGS
7	JURASSIC PARK 3

NOVALICHES
935-3739 TO 31

1	MOULIN ROUGE
2	SOON TO OPEN
3	RED DIARIES
4	JURASSIC PARK 3
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6	CATS & DOGS
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8	NARINIG...ANG L8EST/ MILA

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2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3	CATS & DOGS
4	JURASSIC PARK 3
5	MOULIN ROUGE
6	RED DIARIES

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2	FINAL FANTASY
3	DR. DOLITTLE 2
4	POSSESSED
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6	PANINDA

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ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	CATS & DOGS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	FINAL FANTASY
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	MOULIN ROUGE
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	RED DIARIES
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
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ODEON	KISS OF THE DRAGON
ODEON-2	JURASSIC PARK 3
ROBEN	AMORSEKO
TANDEM-1	NAG AAPOY NA LANGIT
TANDEM-2	HILIG NG KATAWAN
TIMES	MUMMY RETURN / ME, MYSELF & IRENE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
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QUEZON-1	PARU PARONG LIGAW
REMAR	KISS OF THE DRAGON
REMAR-2	PANINDA
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OCEAN CINEMA-B	CRISELDA
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SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
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CINEMA-2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
CINEMA-2	RED DIARIES
CINEMA-3	TOM CATS
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	PEARL HARBOR
CINEMA-6	NAG AAPOY NA LANGIT
CINEMA-7	SWORDFISH
CINEMA-8	FINAL FANTASY
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	CATS & DOGS
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
CINEMA-12	MOULIN ROUGE
CINEMA-14	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-15	RED DIARIES
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
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CINEMA-2	CATS & DOGS
CINEMA-3	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-4	KISS OF THE DRAGON
CINEMA-5	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-6	MOULIN ROUGE
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(LAS PIÑAS)	
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CINEMA-2	RESERVE
CINEMA-4	RESERVE
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	NANANABIK
CINEMA-2	JULIETA
CINEMA-4	SCARED

GENEROSO. Holds a one-night concert at Captain's Bar.

Joey G goes solo

ANOTHER top performer goes onstage on Aug. 9 for 105.1 Crossover's newest musical series, "Crossover Presents" at the Captain's Bar of Mandarin Oriental.

Joey Generoso of Side A is going solo for the one-night limited engagement as he dishes out cool, relaxing and unadulterated crossover music.

Joey G. will perform with Mel Villena on saxophone, Bobby Taylo on bass, Cesar Aguas on guitar and Roy Mercado on drums, under the superb musical direction of Gerard Salonga.

Joining Joey G. in "Crossover Presents" are the inimitable Jon Santos, accompanied by Lorrie Ilustre and vocal quartet The Opera.

Making the night extra special is the launch of "The Greatest Crossover Classics" CD collection from MCA Universal which features an array of Crossover favorites from Spyro Gyra to Jobim and Vanessa Williams to Brian McKnight.

Listen to 105.1 Crossover to get free invitations to this special event. For ticket inquiries, call Ticketworld at 891-5610 or Captain's Bar at 750-8888.

Verni sings at Alegria

MOVIN' UP Production with Casino Filipino-Pavilion present Verni Varga in a concert at 8 p.m. on Aug. 16 at the Alegria Lounge of Holiday Inn Manila, United Nations Avenue.

Lounge singer Lily Beth Garcia and top session musician Toti Fuentes share the stage with Verni.

The show is directed by Andrew de Real.

Tickets are available at major National Bookstore branches, Robinson's Department Store (Malate and Galleria), Tower Records (Makati and Alabang), Music Museum and at Ticketworld (891-5610).

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4:15 - KISS OF THE DRAGON (R-18)
6:25 PM - Kiss of the Dragon
8:35 PM - Kiss of the Dragon
10:45 PM - Kiss of the Dragon

BRIDGET JONES DIARY
opens Wednesday Aug. 8

GET A COPY of the 4th issue of Pelikula: A Journal of Philippine Cinema, one of the beneficiary projects of the LEP Foundation published jointly with the U.P. College of Mass Communication. Special discounts given to Louie's THX members.

Hear the Difference, Feel the Excitement

Boob-tube booboos

HOST: How prosperous is your town now?

Official: Oh, very prosperous!

Host: What are the signs of prosperity that you can point out to our viewers?

Official: Well, you will notice going around our town that our new buildings dito are more or less going up!

(Duh!)

* * *

Host: I understand you've become very religious?

Guest: Well, I try.

Host: What is the role of religion in your life?

Guest: I believe it brings me more closer to God. Also, it makes me trust in Him with all my strength and all my mights, thank you!

(You're, uh, welcome — ?)

* * *

Host: I understand you've become very religious?

Guest: Well, I try.

Host: What is the role of religion in your life?

Guest: I believe it brings me more closer to God. Also, it makes me trust in Him with all my strength and all my might's, thank you!

(You're, uh, welcome — ?)

* * *

Host: What do you plan to take up in college?

Constant: Ah, Law. I want to be lawyer.

Host: Wonderful! And what branch of Law are you planning to enter?

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Constant: Perhaps criminal lawyers?

(Lots of luck!)

* * *

Host: You have become very controversial, all of a sudden…

Starlet: No, I'm still the same.

Host: But some people are saying that you keep changing your version about your love life.

Starlet: No, don't believe them. One thing about me you can be sure, whatever the truth, I will tell you straight in the eye!

(Promise, ha?)

* * *

Host: You once acted with (name o famous actor)?

Guest: Oh, yes, that was a very interesting experience!

Host: What was he like – I mean, really?

Guest: Well, he had so much charisma that when he entered a room, everyone turned to look at him – men, women, even the animals!

(Even the animals?!)

* * *

Host: Why did you join this beauty contest?

Contestant: Me? Join this contest? Why? – Why not?!

(We're sorry we asked!)

* * *

Host: How will you save Mother Earth?

Contestant: I'll save my mother first before the earth. Thank you!

(Wheee!)

* * *

Host: What do you think of Sabah?

Contestant: I think it's a kind of banana!

(And the winner is – not you, dearie!)

TV treats today

AUG. 6 at 8 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel, "When Elephants Die." Living in a matriarchal society, Djua continues to lead her herd despite her advanced age. Wimbo, a male, spends his last years in relative solitude near a watering hole. This documentary shows elephants' never-seen-before death rituals.

At 10 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel, "A Better Tomorrow – Episode 4." GeoWatch Asia shows the changes brought about by the fast pace of modern-day development. Specific features are on the world's most polluted cities, nuclear power plants in Japan, and cleaning up the Ganges river.

'Breakfast' on Studio 23

STARTING today, Aug. 6, the morning show "Breakfast" moves from ANC Channel 21 to Studio 23. The show is hosted by JC Gonzalez, Bam Bam Aquino, Angel Jacob, Ria Tanjuatco and Pia Arcangel.

Features focus on the lifestyle concerns of the youth and puppie markets, music-related portions, fitness tips and workouts, opinion, news, campus international entertainment.

Feedback

FROM Jam Sabalza of Iloilo City: "One of the ways that producers of Filipino movies can get more people to watch their productions is to lower their ticket prices.

"Movies cost so much to watch these days that we moviegoers will definitely welcome any move to reduce the amount we have to pay.

"If the usual ticket price at a theater is P40, can't some of the smaller movies be priced at P35 or P30? Producers can make up for the difference through the added number of viewers who will be enticed to watch their films."

The miracle . . .

(From page A28)

that he wanted his "Dada, I'd have swallowed all my pride and called him up myself.

Regarding the "DPA," there were five other people in the hospital room during Phillip's visit on that first night of Josh's confinement. They were *Yaya* Ana and *Yaya* Mida, my show's executive producer Louie Andrada, his associate producer Arniel Valdez, and my manager Deo Endrinal.

Let's eliminate our two *yayas* as the "DPAs" since they were sound asleep during the entire time. Louie and Arniel have no personal relationship with Ricky Lo, and because I was unable to tape for the remainder of Josh's hospitalization, they were scrambling the whole of Thursday to make up for the two features I missed out on taping.

Deo hadn't spoken to Ricky Lo in nearly three weeks, and the only person he'd given an account to about what went on in the room was my The Buzz co-host Boy Abunda. Boy does speak to Ricky almost daily but he swore that last Thursday he hadn't spoken to Ricky.

Boy loves and respects my mom. He'd never tell a story that would put her in an "intriguing" situation.

'Love triangle'

Phillip and I will be brought together because of Joshua, but Josh and I have tried our best to make a life independent of him. In many ways, my mom has filled the parental void in Josh's life, emotionally and financially. That's normally what a loving grandmother of the child of a single parent does.

For all that she has done and continues to do for Josh and me, my mom didn't deserve to be written about in that light.

Walls in St. Luke's don't have ears or eyes. If they did, they should have made mention of the fact that there was someone else, a male friend of mine who visited us mere minutes after Phillip came into the room. He left after checking on us because he didn't want to intrude during Phillip's moment.

For the more inclined toward gossiping, that scene did happen and could be easily misconstrued as a "love triangle."

I'm normally able to roll with the punches. After all I've been in show business for half my life already. I reacted violently this time around and went out of my way to set the record straight because the issue involved two people I love dearly, my son and my mom.

We all went through a traumatic experience, and we shouldn't have what went on in my son's hospital room treated like a "telenovela" plot.

As Ricky Lo said in his column. "For sure, nobody shouted 'Cut!' It was for real..." I just wonder why he couldn't have taken into consideration that we are real people also, allowed the same fears and feelings as everybody else.

Fame's price

Any *lola* or mom who is reading this right now would understand where I'm coming from. My child's life was almost lost. Some compassion in the telling of the story would've been appreciated.

I can never change the circumstances surrounding Josh's birth, and I know that because of my job our lives will always be open to speculation. This is one instance, though, when I feel that fame really does extract such a high price, especially in the lives of the people you most care about.

As a postscript to this article, Phillip and Josh had good father son bonding during Josh's second night of confinement. I purposely stayed away and watched TV with ZsaZsa Padilla, one of my closest friends, on the other side of the suite.

Josh and I are currently living in my mom's house since our townhouse's bedrooms are all on the second floor and Josh still can't manage the stairs.

We'll be here for the next few weeks, or if we really like it, we'll disrupt my mom's peaceful existence and move in permanently.

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

1	2	3
CATS & DOGS - GP 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00	CATS & DOGS - GP 12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8:00, 10:00	JURASSIC PARK 3 - P13 11:50, 1:50, 3:50, 5:50, 8:00, 10:10
KISS OF THE DRAGON - R 18 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50	JURASSIC PARK 3 - P 13 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:10, 9:20	MOULIN ROUGE - R 18 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

Matinee: P80, Mon.-Fri. 11:10 am to 4:45 pm Screenings, Free Seating.

6TH "JET LI DRAGON POWER" DAY!
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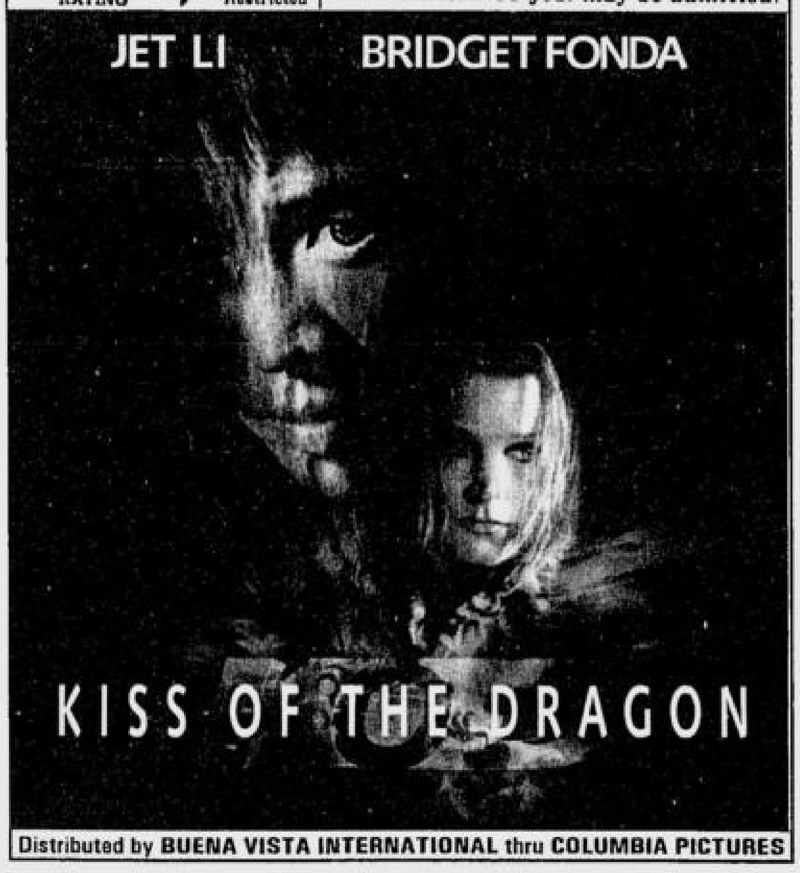

Distributed by BUENA VISTA INTERNATIONAL thru COLUMBIA PICTURES

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
The film contains language which young audiences may find disturbing.
Parents and guardians are strongly cautioned against bringing children 13 years and below.

MAKE IT A DATE IN YOUR DIARY
August 2001

			1	2	3	4
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12	13	14	15			
19	20	21	22			
	26	27	28	29		

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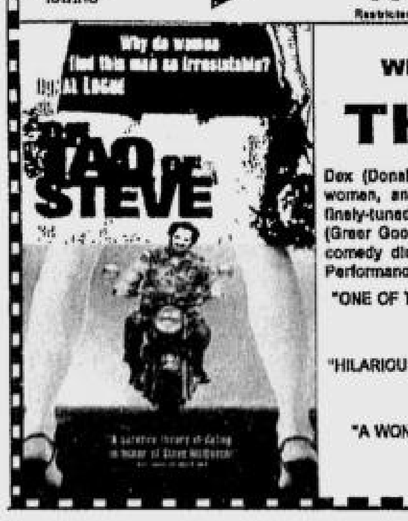

Why do women find this man so irresistable?
THE TAO OF STEVE

PHILIPPINE PREMIERE
Why do women find this man so irressistable?
THE TAO OF $TEVE
Dex (Donal Logue) is a lovable kindergarten teacher who has extraordinary success with women, and a sexual appetite to match. Women go crazy for him, and men admire his finely-tuned romantic philosophy. The only woman who is not wooed by his charms is Syd (Greer Goodman), an old college friend. THE TAO OF STEVE is a light and spunky romantic comedy directed by Jenniphr Goodman.The film, and Logue's role in it, got the Outstanding Performance Special Jury Prize at Sundance 2000.
"ONE OF THE MOST PLEASURABLE FILMS AT SUNDANCE & ONE OF THE MOST DISARMING ROMANTIC COMEDIES I'VE SEEN IN YEARS."
-Glenn Kenny, PREMIERE
"HILARIOUS & HEARTFELT! DONAL LOGUE'S KNOCKOUT PERFORMANCE SHOULD MAKE HIM A STAR."
-Peter Travers, ROLLING STONE
"A WONDERFULLY WITTY ROMANTIC COMEDY THAT HAS BOTH CRITICS & AUDIENCES RAVING!"
-JonathanForeman, NEW YORK POST

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

THE PRODUCING TEAM OF 'BIG DADDY' DELIVERS ANOTHER WINNER!
"THE COMEDY HIT OF THE SUMMER!" SHAWN EDWARDS, FOX-TV
THE ANIMAL
REVOLUTION STUDIOS
MEDIATRIP.COM/THEANIMAL

Schneider, 'ANIMAL': Hayop sa katatawanan
Rob Schneider, lovable Filipino star of the comedy hit DEUCE BIGALOW MALE GIGOLO is back, funnier than ever in Columbia Pictures' THE ANIMAL.
As Marvin Mange, he has the strength of a lion, the agility of a chimpanzee and the affections of... a goat?
Thanks to a life-saving experimental surgery that fuses his body with animal parts, Marvin's dreams of becoming a cop like his dad come true. Armed with new bulging muscles and a keen sense of smell, he even becomes a police hero, as he saves a drowning boy and sniffs out drug smugglers at the airport.
But complications arise when he starts falling for Rianna (Colleen Haskell, *Survivor*), an animal shelter volunteer. Will he finally be able to control his beastly ways with the woman he loves?
OPENS AUG. 8!

ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

The miracle of Joshua's survival

"MA'AM, *si* Joshua *nasagasaan. Papunta na kami sa* St. Luke's, *pumunta na kayo doon.*"

Yaya Ana was calling me on the cell phone. That conversation would be any parent's worst nightmare.

I called my mom immediately on her cell phone and she said she'd go straight to St. Lukes's:

I was at James Cooper's Valencia Hills salon that Wednesday afternoon. My appointments — a ribbon cutting for The Red Crab Restaurant on Morato and a feature taping of a bowling segment — were all in the evening so I was treating myself to a hot oil hair treatment, manicure and pedicure. Unbeknownst to me, my Expedition had gone back to our townhouse because some make-up had been left behind. I had sent the car and driver to fetch Haidee, my make-up artist for that day, at Bambbi Fuentes' shop on Timog, and they had made a side trip back to our home.

KRIS AND TELL

Kris Aquino

Josh was in the playground with his Yaya Ana when he saw the Expedition. Josh chased after the car and tried to climb aboard because he wanted to go to where I was. He fell and the driver didn't see him. The car literally ran over him. There are tire marks on his right leg to prove this.

There was a miracle that day, one for which I will be grateful for the rest of my son's life. Our orthopedic surgeons, Dr. George Canalas and Dr. Joe Gonzales, said the weight of the Expedition on a six-year-old's thigh, no matter how robust he was, should have at the very least fractured his bones. All the X-rays on Josh showed that his bones were intact.

Had Josh been run over in his pelvic area, that would have been a bigger catastrophe because he has implants in his urinary tract. He was operated on when he was 10 months because his ureter wouldn't contract and the urine, instead of flowing out his bladder, would re-flux back to his kidneys.

Had this not been corrected at that time, it could have led to permanent kidney damage. A spinal injury could have also paralyzed my son.

Intercession

I don't know how many of you believe in the intercession of the saints and Mama Mary, but Josh's survival has strengthened my faith in the novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Baclaran and the novena to St. Martha. They must have made sure his guardian angel was extremely alert in protecting him.

By some quirk of fate, because my taping for "The Buzz" went beyond dinnertime last Saturday, July 28, I was unable to go to Mass with my mom, as has been my practice since "Kris and Tell" started taping Sunday nights. I went to the 6 p.m. Sunday Mass at Mt. Carmel.

The parish was concluding the novena to St. Matha, whose image was prominently displayed up front. St. Martha is the patroness of all mothers. That night all I prayed for was that Josh be blessed with good health, a happy and productive life, and I made a special intention that he'd do well in our upcoming diagnostic session with his developmental pediatrician.

Lucid, conscious

My mom had arrived in the emergency room 10 minutes before I did. The owner of the parlor kindly lent me her car and driver to bring me to St. Luke's. From Valencia to E. Rodriquez should normally take less than 10 minutes by car, but the 5 p.m. traffic slowed me down and it took nearly 25 minutes for me to get to the hospital.

What kept me going was the fact that I heard my son crying while I was talking to his *yaya* on the cell phone. At least I knew he was lucid and conscious.

My sister Pinky had said that when my mom was on the phone with her, my mom's voice was shaking and in near tears. My mom has always been our source of strength. All my sisters feared the worst had happened to Josh since the night before, "TV Patrol" had a story about a four-year-old who had chased after the *yaya* and had gotten run over by a car and had died.

My mom just embraced me when I got to the ER. Josh calmed a bit when he saw me, but he refused to let go of my hand all the time that he was being wheeled to the X-ray room and all throughout the battery of tests he had to undergo.

Laughter and relief

When the X-rays showed that there were no broken bones but there were deep tissue bruising and severe hematoma, my mom, my three older sisters, my Auntie Passy and my cousin Rina, who'd all arrived in the hospital by then, felt an enormous burden was lifted from all our hearts.

When we were brought to our hospital room, since Josh had to be confined for two nights so that he could be observed and given the proper painkillers, Josh made his *Lola* Cory and all of us laugh in relief.

The pain must have been awful since he'd already been given a sedative and he was still crying. When his *Lola* asked what he wanted, Josh said, "*Lichias*" Despite being groggy, he was so impatient for the arrival of his lychees, which came all the way from my mom's house. When they did, Josh had at least 30 pieces one after the other. My mom said at least now we knew what Josh's pain reliever was.

Thank you

Let me now give my thanks to all the people who called up, sent text messages, expressed sympathy and shared their prayers.

Last Friday, while we were still in St. Luke's, I read in Ricky Lo's column his "DPA" (Deep Penetration Agent) account of the "silent drama at the hospital."

I'd given Leah Salterio the facts of Josh's freak accident by text because my editor Louie Camino had asked me to. I also gave TV Patrol's Korina Sanchez a live phone interview upon my mom's advice since it would be better for me to give a personal account rather than have unwanted tabloid speculation and exaggeration.

Both the Inquirer and TV Patrol stuck to the facts and gave fair reports regarding our ordeal.

Josh wasn't merely scraped by the rear wheel, he was run over by the wheel. Yes, Tito Ricky, Josh really could've been a "goner" as you had put it in your column, and the miracle is that he survived after having gone under the car.

Impossible

My mom left the hospital around 9:30 p.m. Phillip (Salvador, Joshua's dad) didn't arrive until nearly 1 a.m. I'm sure of this because the television was turned on and "Martin Late at Night" was about to end. That's not "a few minutes," as Tito Ricky had written, but more like a few hours.

Josh was given another shot of Benadryl to help him sleep at around the same time my mom and sisters were leaving the hospital room. By the time his dad had arrived, Josh was in a deep, drug-induced sleep, so it would be impossible for him to have "hugged and kissed" his "Papa Phillip."

I'd been clutching my rosary for most of the night, but I never started praying out loud, as Tito Ricky wrote. When I go to Baclaran and I pray all three Mysteries of the Rosary, I normally ask my companions if we could pray the last rosary together, but that's the only time I ever pray out loud.

Primary concern

Tito Ricky also wrote: "Kris gave Phillip the cold-shoulder treatment, not talking to him nor giving him even a quick glance all the while he was there."

Hello? Josh refused to lie on the hospital bed unless I was beside him. I didn't leave his side. When his father walked in, I had no choice but to look at him and answer some of his questions since it was only Josh's sleeping body that separated us. Phillip had tried to embrace Josh and he sat by my son's bedside.

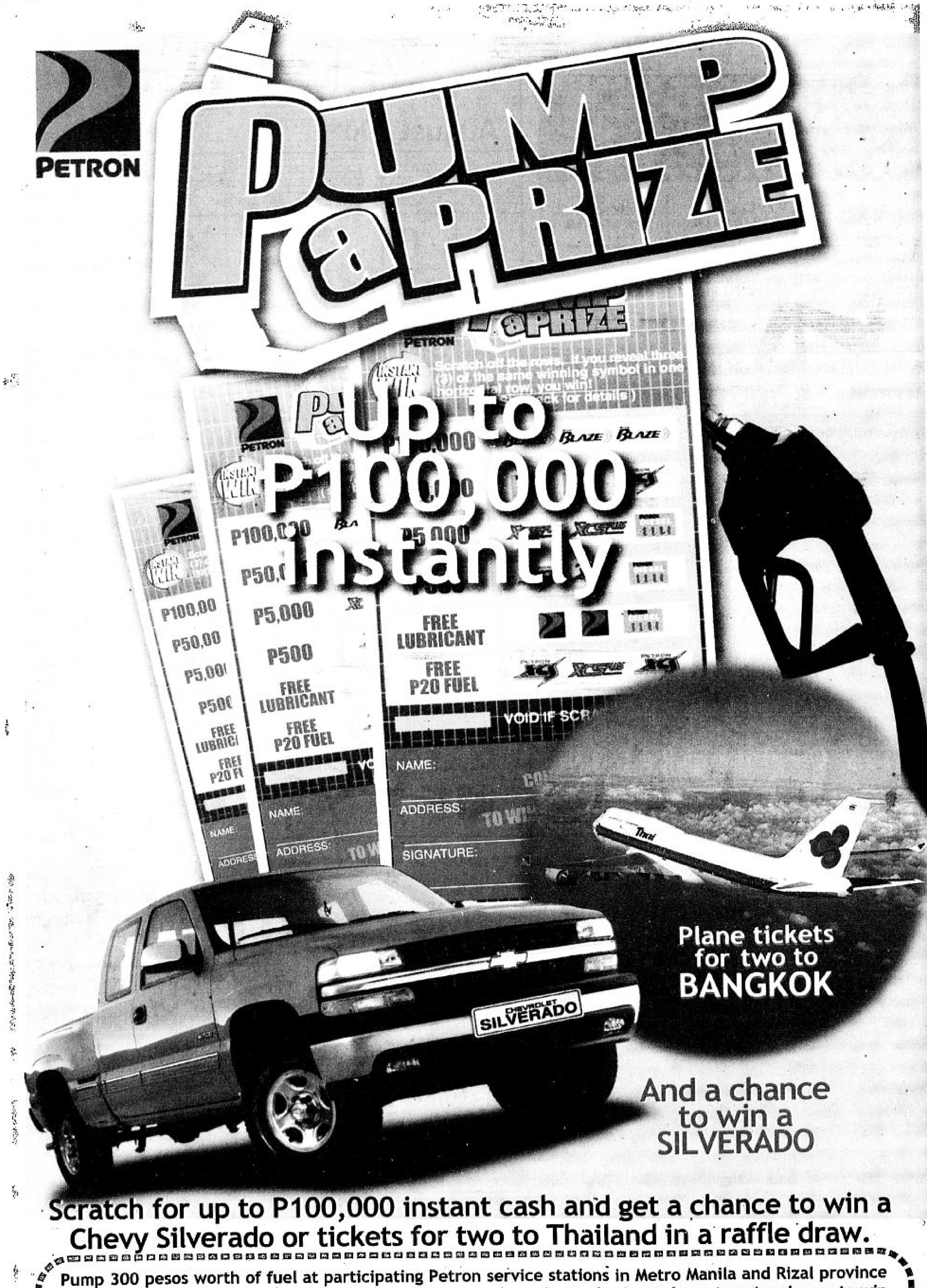
Phillip and I have avoided speaking to each other since October 2000. I've made no secret of the fact that whenever he wanted to see Josh, he'd course the schedule through *Yaya* Ana.

Yes, it would have been awkward for Josh's *Lola* and his "Dada" to have been together, but my mom is far from short-sighted. After all, Phillip will always be Josh's biological father. If it would have eased Josh's pain to have his dad by his side, then I know my mom would've accepted the situation with an open mind and heart. Our primary concern was Josh's safety.

'DPA'

Honestly though, the only people that Josh constantly called out for in the ER and the X-ray room were me, his *Yaya* Ana, and his *Lola*. That's it. We are the constants in his life, and we were the ones he needed for reassurance. Had Josh said

THE MIRACLE/ A29



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BSP poises further hike in bank reserves

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas is considering another two-percentage-point increase in the reserve requirement on banks to help ease the pressure on the peso and to tame inflation.

"We could increase the reserve requirement by another two percentage points depending on the findings of our research department, which is still evaluating the extent of excess liquidity in the system," Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura said on Friday.

A further hike in the bank reserve requirement becomes more apparent with President Macapagal-Arroyo's call on the Bangko Sentral to bring down the exchange rate to P50 to $1 by year's end.

Only last July 27, the Bangko Sentral's policy-making Monetary Board raised the liquidity reserve on commercial banks' deposits and deposit substitutes to 9 percent from 7 percent. The statutory reserve was maintained at 9 percent.

Excess money in the system is being seen as a continued threat to the recovery of the peso, which closed at 53.45 to a dollar last Friday, as well as to inflation, which was estimated to have hit 6.9 percent in July.

The liquidity reserve earns prevailing market interest rates while the statutory reserves earn lower. Banks prefer that the BSP raise the liquidity reserve.

Buenaventura said monetary authorities could choose to make the adjustment either from the liquidity or the statutory portion of the reserve requirement. Either way, a two-percentage-point hike should siphon off P27.4 billion in excess money.

The Bangko Sentral chief acknowledged that the plan two weeks ago was to raise the reserve requirement by four percentage points as the market had expected.

He explained, however, that monetary authorities preferred to do a gradual adjustment, fearing that a drastic increase in the level of the mandated reserves could be overdone.

"I didn't want to go up immediately by four percentage points because we might overdo it and then bring it down later. Doing it gradually is better specially when we are not at that point that's desperate," Buenaventura said.

The central bank chief explained that the excess money from the system could otherwise lead to a higher inflation in the coming months or could be used by banks to speculate against the peso.

Banks currently set aside 19 centavos for every peso of their loanable funds and keep these in the central bank's vaults.

Buenaventura pointed out that excess liquidity, being a growing threat to inflation, had to be addressed. This was partly why the central bank continued to review the level of money in the system.

The central bank governor pointed out that the Bangko Sentral earlier projected that starting in the second half of the year, the inflation rate should start tapering off.

"But the higher rates are sticking around because of a weaker peso and higher oil prices," he said. The BSP expects inflation to range between 6.7 and 6.9 percent in July from 6.7 percent a month ago.

Last Thursday, monetary authorities also removed the incremental reduction in the Bangko Sentral's overnight borrowing and had started to pay bank deposits to the central bank a flat 9-percent rate.

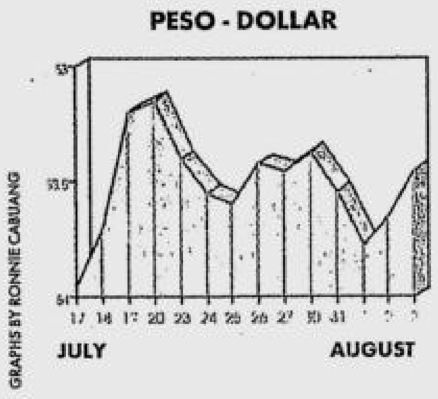
The Bangko Sentral chief had also voiced plans of raising overnight rates as the central bank's last option to help prop up the peso and contain inflation.

Raising interest rates is more harmful to the economy because it would tend to jack up bank lending rates as well as the government's cost of borrowing.

The Bangko Sentral chief pointed out that raising the reserve requirement would be more costly for the central bank because it would have to shell out more to pay interest on the banks' money.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



Peso-Dollar Rate

₱53.450 = $1

As of 5 p.m.,
August 3, 2001

¥123.84 = $1

The US dollar was trading at 123.84 as of 5 p.m., August 3, 2001

GOLD:$268.40/268.90

per ounce Hong Kong, August 3, 2001

Market weakness seen to persist

MARKET sentiment is expected to remain negative as the peace and order situation in Mindanao, the kidnappings and the peso volatility keep investors on the sidelines.

Analysts also expect the current selling pressure due to the closure of the local operations of some foreign brokerages to continue. However, some analysts said the market seems to be poised for some accumulation as the current levels may be attractive to some bargain hunters. If the peso appreciates further next week and sustains that level, this may help improve local sentiment, they said. Some positive surprises in the release of first-half results may lift the market but investors' interest might be limited to specific companies, they pointed out.

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VECTRA 2.0L A/T	Sedan	₱ 1,165,000	₱ 582,500	₱ 32,362	ZERO% INTEREST
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HSBC sees peso recovery to 50 to $1 by yearend

By Clarissa S. Batino

FOREIGN bank HSBC Corp. has turned bullish on the Philippines, saying the national government can contain its budget deficit to P145 billion and the peso can recover to 50 to a dollar by year's end.

The bank said in its latest report that the Macapagal administration's political will would enable the government to institute fiscal discipline.

The local HSBC unit recently sealed an underwriting agreement with the government on a $220-million peso-to-dollar swap borrowing.

"Notwithstanding political distractions, we remain positive on the Macapagal administration's ability over the medium term to reverse a deteriorating public finance and attract investments into the country," HSBC said.

The foreign bank used to have a bearish view on the country's economic growth, saying that growth in gross domestic product would likely hit less than 2 percent even at the time when the government was still targeting a higher range of 3.8 to 4.3 percent GDP growth.

Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura said an HSBC study showed that the peso can recover to 50 to a dollar by year's end. "I tend to share their view that the peso can recover to 50 if the export sector will recover or if the local economy will compensate (for a slack in exports)," the central bank chief said.

Buenaventura said containing the deficit at P145 billion this year was crucial in restoring investor confidence.

"One of the nagging question brought out in every analysis is the handling of the deficit. It is primarily driven by the fear that the government may exceed its target. But we were assured by the finance department that they can meet the target," he pointed out.

HSBC said what was crucial for the government was to get Congress to approve important reforms such as the amendment to the Comprehensive Tax Reform Law.

"We believe it will be easier for the Macapagal administration to broaden the tax base and implement better control over expenditures given the strong support the regime has in the Senate."

The foreign bank had cited the "credible job" of the government in containing the deficit below the target so far. A deficit within target would allow the government to bring down its cost of borrowings and lead to a lower interest rates regime, HSBC said.

GERMAN INVESTOR IN MANILA

In a courtesy call on President Macapagal-Arroyo, officials of Steag Aktiengesellschaft (Steag AG), a German power producer, and State Investment Trust Inc. (SITI) discussed their joint venture investment in a $300-million, 200-mw coal-fired power plant in Mindanao. Flanking the President are (from left) Heinz Scholtholt, Steag board member, Washington SyCip, chair of SITI, and Allen Roxas, president of SITI. Also present during the meeting are (standing, from left): Claus-Peter Bell, executive vice president of Steag AG; German Ambassador to Manila Herbert Jess, SITI executive vice president Augusto Lopez-Dee, and Energy Undersecretary Cyril del Callar.

PNOC unit, ATI plan wharf joint venture

By Ronnel W. Domingo

PHILIPPINE National Oil Co. subsidiary Filoil Development and Management Corp. is negotiating with Asian Terminals Inc. for the development of a wharf that would facilitate passenger and cargo traffic between Manila and the Cavite export processing zone.

Filoil president Cirilo S. Martinez said last week the planned joint venture would bring momentum to the development of the firm's 118-hectare property in Rosario, Cavite, worth about P1.5 billion.

Martinez said the plan included building a four-hectare terminal that would accommodate catamarans to carry passengers and cargo belonging to the economic zone's locators.

"This would cut down travel time to between 15 minutes and 30 minutes," he said.

He added that the catamarans would be ready by September and that preparing the terminal would be fast since Filoil had existing buildings in the property.

Martinez said Filoil hoped to close a long-term deal with the operator of the South Harbor, where the firms would share the revenues from the wharf.

He explained further that Filoil was considering to develop its property in phases instead of an earlier plan to hire only one firm to develop all of the 118 hectares.

"(The original plan) would take 10 to 12 years but we cannot wait that long, we need immediate solutions particularly to our socialized housing project," Martinez said.

SEC hikes corporate, service fees

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has raised its fees for corporate and securities registration and other services in line with the government's overall thrust to improve revenue collection.

"With these revised rates and assuming favorable developments in the world economy, the projected incremental service fees will amount to P47 million. This is the projected additional amount that could be collected for the rest of the year," the SEC said in a letter to Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho last month.

The increased fees and charges were made effective in July this year or seven years after the last general fee increase was made in 1994, except for microfilm reproduction of records, which was increased in June 1998.

Under the new rates, examining and filing fee for applications of articles of incorporation would be computed at one-fifth of one percent of the authorized capital or subscription price, whichever is higher, but not less than P1,000. A similar fee would be applied on applications for increase in capital stock. The applicable rate used to be one-tenth of one percent.

Applicants for registration of commercial paper, whether long-term or short-term, now have to pay one-tenth of one percent of the total amount of paper to be issued.

The SEC also raised the fees charged by its economic research and information department.

The SEC has also come up with new fees. In particular, applications for equity restructuring, if to wipe out existing debt will be slapped P3,000, and if infusion as additional paid-in capital will be charged one-fifth of one percent of the amount infused but not less than P1,000. Property dividends are also charged one-fifth of one percent of the amount declared but not less than P1,000.

Moreover, application for regional operating headquarters or petition for conversion of an area or regional headquarters into a regional operating headquarters will be subject to a charge of one percent of the actual remittance but not less than one percent of the peso equivalent of $200,000 at the time of remittance.

Earlier, the SEC was considering bringing down to a maximum of P5 million the fees on applications for increase in capital stock in order to encourage investments but this was questioned by the finance department, which is tasked to generate revenue and other means of financing to meet the government's budgetary requirements.

Globe, US firm sign $1-M deal

By Abigail L. Ho

GLOBE Telecom, the telecommunications arm of the Ayala group, has awarded a $1-million power system contract to Texas-based Tyco Electronics Power Systems Inc.

Under the agreement, Tyco will provide the power system for Globe's backhaul transmission equipment and cable landing facilities in Nasugbu, Batangas.

The backhaul transmission equipment will carry international voice, data and other traffic to and from Nasugbu and its network.

The cable landing facilities, on the other hand, will be part of the transmission equipment under the $2-billion city-to-city (C2C) cable network project where Globe has a 5-percent stake.

Globe's principal shareholder, Singapore Telecommunications Ltd., has a 60-percent interest in the project. C2C is being constructed by Singtel-formed private cable developer and operator C2C Pte. Ltd.

The local landing facility is set to be completed within the fourth quarter of the year.

Globe Telecom is owned by Ayala Corp., Singtel International and Deutsche Telekom Asia. It has more than 3 million subscribers all over the country.

Tyco Electronics Power Systems is a leading manufacturer of DC (direct current) power system and board power supplies. It is part of Tyco International Ltd.

Meantime, Globe Telecom expects to increase the revenue contribution of its value-added services to more than 20 percent with the launch of myGlobe, a mobile e-services line.

"Compared to voice, value-added services don't really contribute that much to Globe's revenues. It accounts for just 15 to 20 percent of wireless revenues. But with myGlobe, we expect to surpass this," Globe assistant vice president for marketing Nicanor Santiago III said in an interview last Friday.

He added that, over time, people would begin to

GLOBE/ B3

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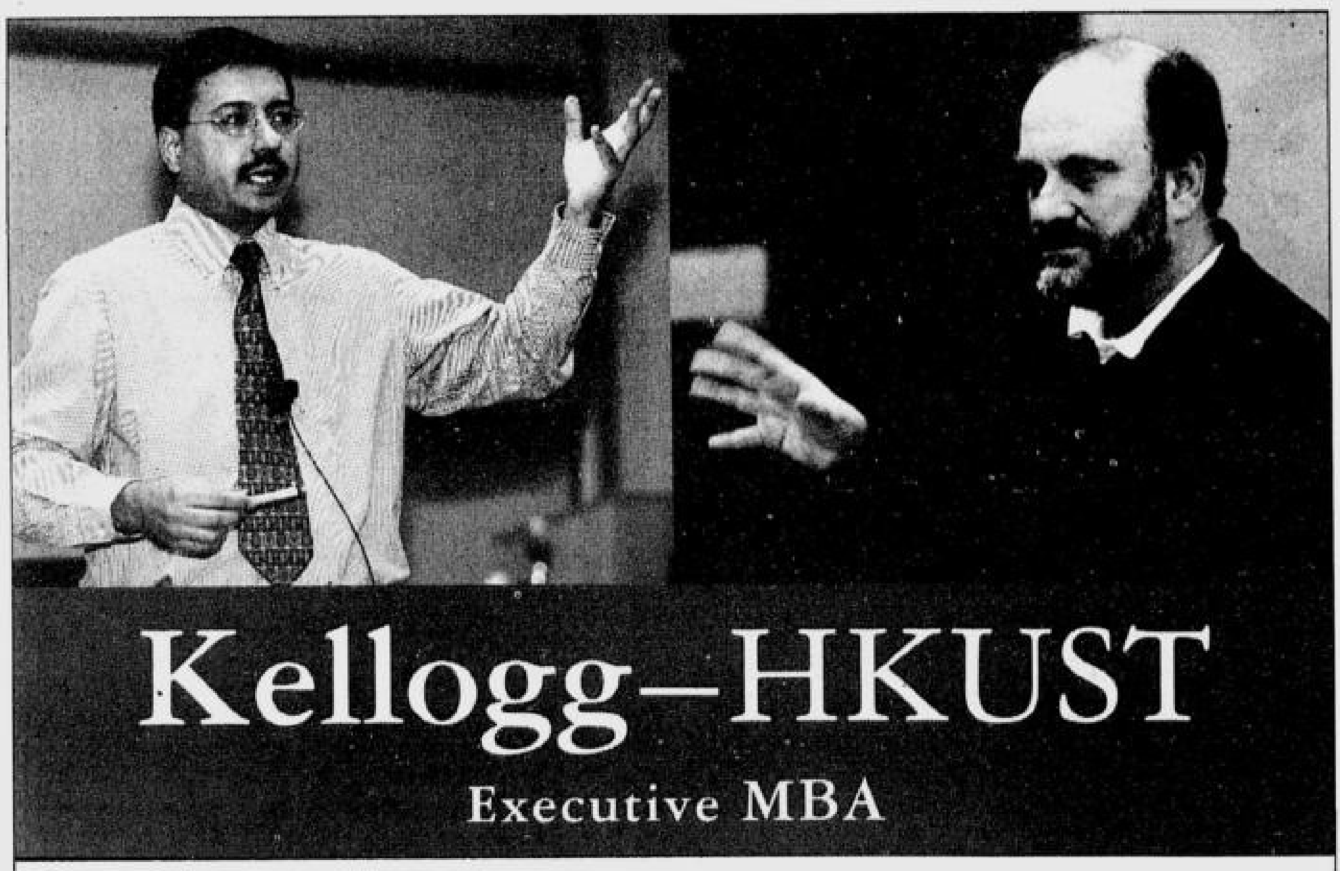

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Where you will meet professors, alumni and students to get a better understanding of the program...

Hong Kong
Date: 15 August 2001 (Wednesday)
Venue: Pacific Place Conference Centre
L5 One Pacific Place
88 Queensway, Admiralty
Time: 6:30 – 8 p.m.

Philippines
Date: 13 August 2001 (Monday)
Venue: Makati Shangri-la
Ayala Avenue Corner
Makati Avenue, Makati City
Time: 6:30 – 8 p.m.

Taiwan
Date: 20 August 2001 (Monday)
Venue: Far Eastern Plaza Hotel
Taipei Metro, 201 Tun Hwa S. Rd.
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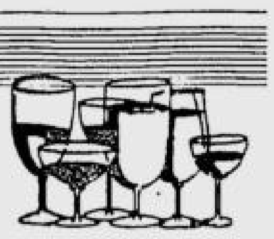

By Victor C. Agustin

YEP, there is apparently such a thing, if we go by the position of the chairman and president of the sequestered Channel 13 station.

Renato Bello, reacting on a July 27 Cocktales item, said there was nothing irregular for Channel 13 acquiring P1.43-million Starex vans from a blocktimer even though the vans cost only about P900,000 each.

There was nothing irregular either for the Channel 13 board accepting a Nissan Exalta STA valued at P785,000 and booking it for P1.898 million as offset payment.

"This (practice) allows IBC-13 to acquire assets without paying cash," Bello said. "These assets are sold to IBC-13 with a certain mark-up to recover the discount given to (the blocktimer's) customer and earn a profit from the entire arrangement."

In plain language, what Bello, a lawyer, is saying is that this arrangement guarantees the Channel 13 blocktimer from any incurring any loss at all. Whatever "discount" the blocktimer may offer to end-party sponsors the blocktimer could turn around and recover from the government TV station not only the discount but also, to quote Bello, "earn a profit."

If Bello's name rings a bell, it is because he is the same Bello in the De Borja Medialdea Bello Guevarra Serapio & Gerodias law office, the same firm where Erap lawyer Edward Serapio was once a proud partner.

Bello was appointed to the Channel 13 board during Erap's time but, unlike Erap-named chair/president Ma. Elisa "Boots" Anson Roa, Bello survived the Edsa II changeover to even succeed the actress. It helped, according to insiders, that Bello counts among his clients Brother Mike Velarde.

Bello also said that Twenty Plus is not the coffee shop that was reported in the July 27 column, but he did not say whether the two similarly named corporations have interlocking directors/shareholders.

According to Bello, the airtime provided by Channel 13 to Twenty Plus are "deadtime… which no other airtime buyer…was willing to purchase." Previous to the offsetting arrangement, Channel 13 had resorted to buying programs just to fill the dead hours, whose timeslot its advertising executives could not find advertising sponsors.

Twenty Plus offered to take up the deadtime, with the blocktimer reselling the airtime to sponsors at a

COCKTALES/ B4

Globe, US firm sign $1-M deal

(From page B2)

enjoy accessing wireless data more.

"It's going to take time, but it will go up," he said.

MyGlobe can be accessed by any Globe Handyphone subscriber without having to change SIM (subscriber identification module) cards or handsets.

Santiago said this was one of the things that give myGlobe an edge over the competition.

"Other service providers need you to get a particular SIM pack to access their portals, but we've made access to our mobile e-services more convenient," he said.

He added that Globe has put more emphasis on "localizing" myGlobe to suit the Filipino taste.

"What we've learned in this business is that we have to listen to what the consumers want, so we handpicked content providers that we think would provide information that the Filipinos want," he said.

MyGlobe's group of content providers is a mixture of local and foreign companies. These are CNN, ABS-CBN, Pinoycentral, Wireless Services Asia, Riot-e and Yahoo, among others.

Santiago also said that myGlobe had organized its applications and services so they would be easy to use.

"We placed the services under nine simple categories so subscribers won't have a hard time understanding which services they would want to access," he said.

Belle eyes sale of more assets

BY D. C. DUMLAO

LEISURE estate and gaming firm Belle Corp. is set to sell another 29-percent stake in spin-off property unit Highlands Prime Leisure Properties Inc. and other assets to raise more funds to reduce its P6.6 billion worth of debts.

In an interview with the INQUIRER, Belle vice chair Willy Ocier said the company would be able to realize by end-October the full P2.5-billion payment from retail tycoon Henry Sy who had recently agreed to buy 51 percent of Highlands Prime.

Belle spun off more than 600 hectares of core property assets—consisting of subdivision lots and unsold condominium units in Tagaytay Highlands International Golf Club Inc. in Tagaytay City, Cavite and Tagaytay Midlands Golf Club Inc. in Batangas—into the newly created subsidiary Highlands Prime.

"But this won't be enough to cover all our debts. We'll have to sell more assets," Ocier said.

"Belle plans to keep only 20 percent of Highlands Prime. So we can still sell more shares to other investors who are willing to join the project," he said.

Based on the agreed value of Sy's 51-percent subscription, Belle could raise another P1.45 billion from the sale of the remaining 29 percent in Highlands Prime, which would also be listed on the Philippine Stock Exchange within this year.

Ocier said that while Sy would anchor the development and had agreed to take over majority of Highlands Prime without waiting for other investors, Belle could still take in other interested parties in the near future.

Meanwhile, the payment from Sy would be placed in an escrow account until Belle is able to strike a debt restructuring deal with its creditors.

Sy's investment will be made through Sysmart Corp., which is part of the SM group, developer and operator of the biggest shopping mall chain in the country. Ocier said Sy had already made a P250-million downpayment through Sysmart.

Other investors keen on investing in Highlands Prime are US-based investment group Goldman Sachs; Keppel Land Inc., the local property unit of the Keppel group of Singapore; tobacco magnate Lucio Tan, and Geronimo Velasco, chair of publicly listed Republic Glass Holdings Corp.

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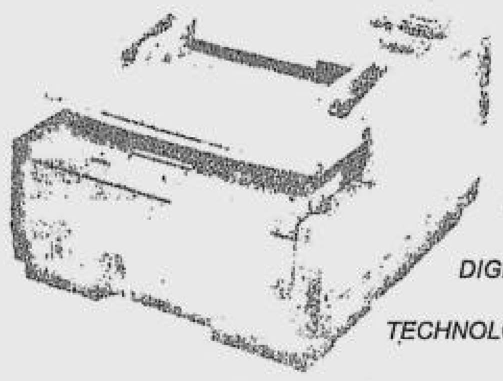

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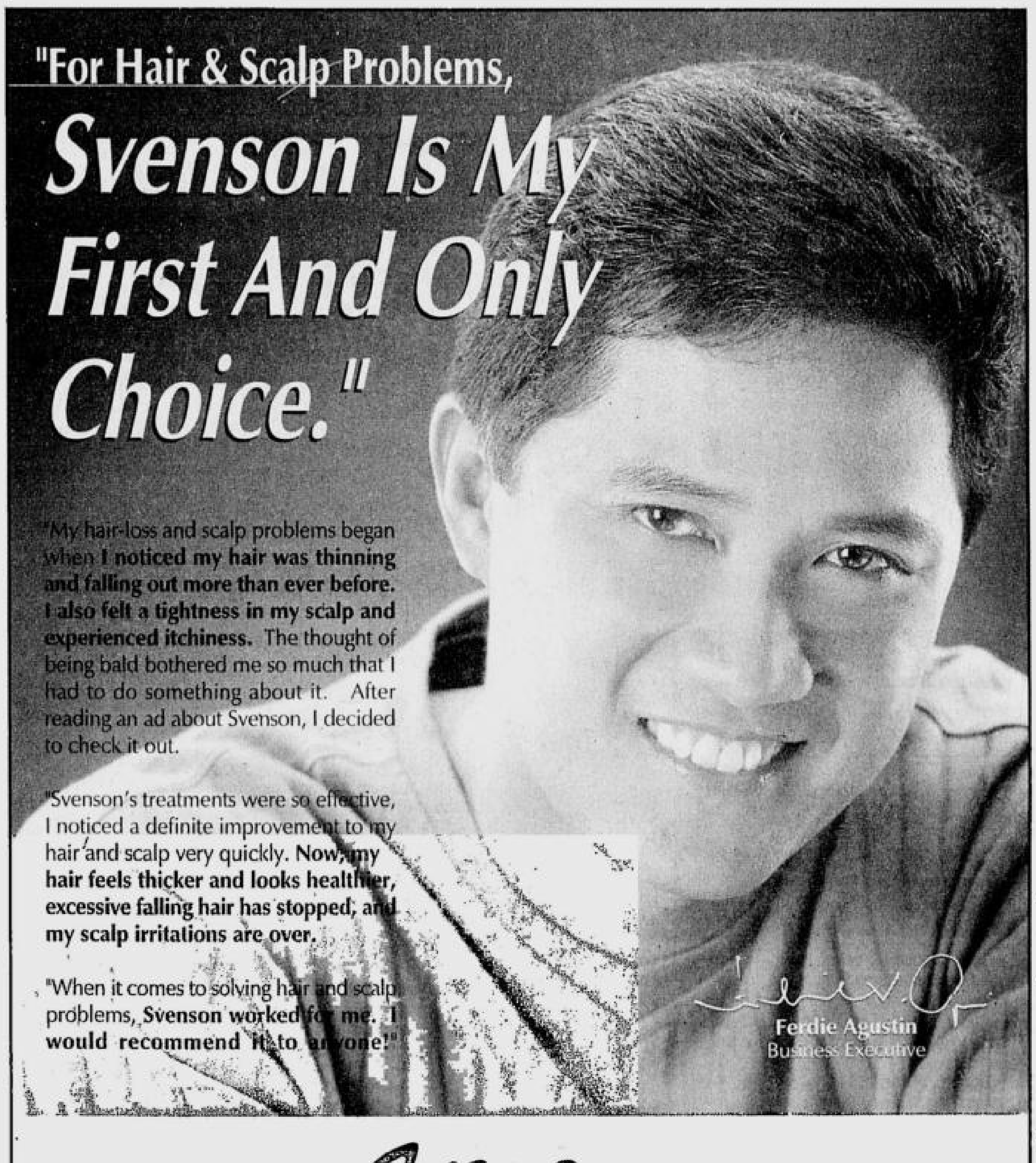
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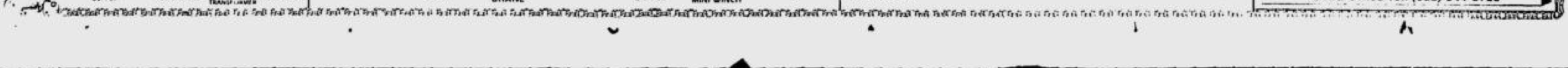

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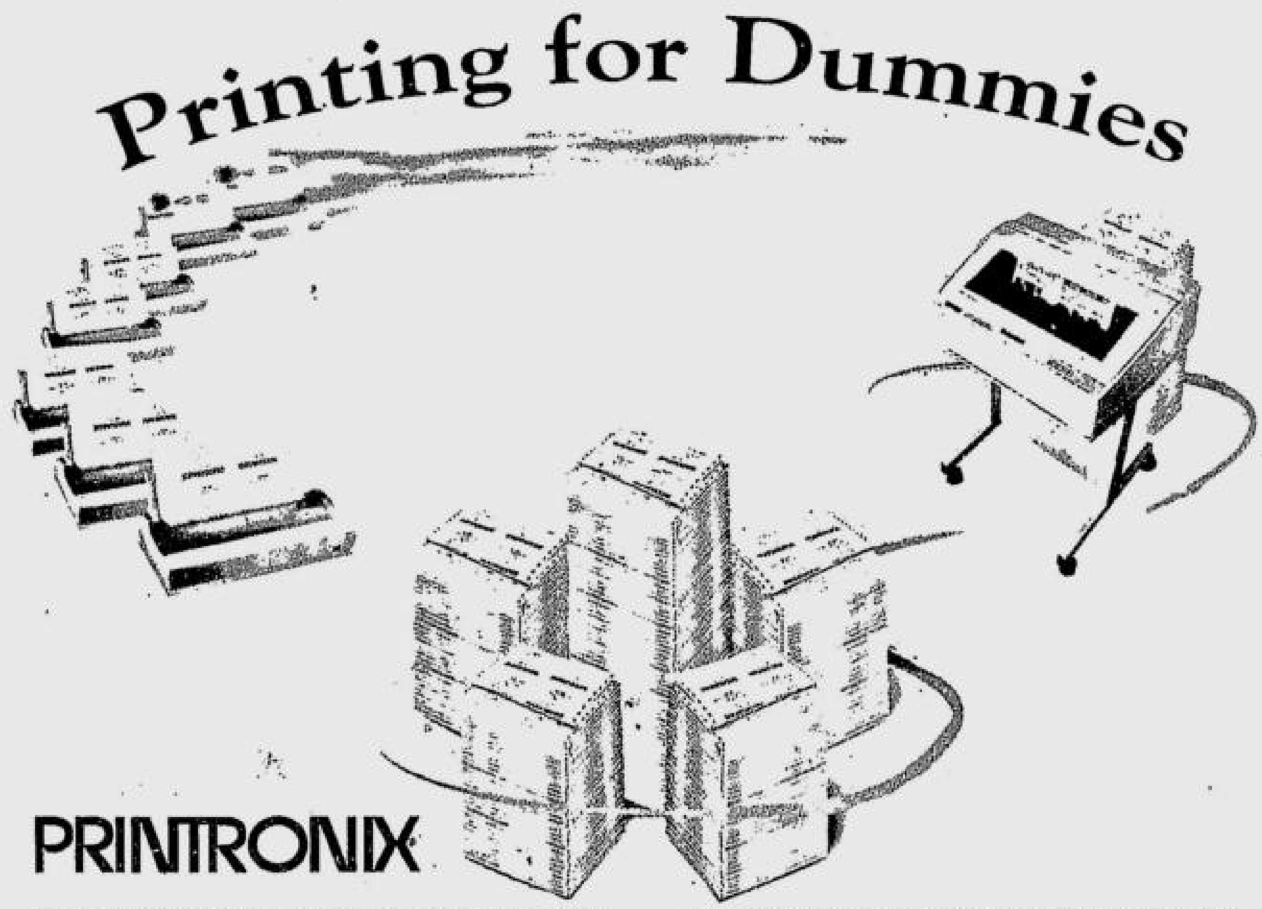
Philratings upgrades Orix's LTCP

PHILIPPINE Rating Services Corp. has upgraded its rating on Orix Metro Leasing and Finance Corp.'s outstanding P175-million long-term commercial papers (LTCPs).

From PRS "Baa," the commercial papers' rating was improved to PRS "A," which indicates that the LTCPs have favorable investment attributes and are considered as upper-medium grade obligations. Factors giving security to principal and interest are considered adequate, but elements may be present which suggest a susceptibility to impairment some time in the future.

The rating upgrade was based on a "significant improvement in Orix Metro's asset quality as of June 2001 and the support coming from its parent companies, Metrobank and Orix Corp. of Japan," PhilRatings said. Orix Metro's past dues have substantially gone down and only account for 7 percent of total loan portfolio, compared with 12 percent last year. Ropoas have likewise gone down from P46 million a year ago to P24 million as of June 2001.

Printing for Dummies



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CONFERENCE PROGRAM

SEPTEMBER 13, 2001 (Thursday)
Makati Shangri-la Hotel

Growth of Franchising in Asia: An Overview
Industry Update: Trends and Innovations *(11 Country Reports Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, Taiwan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Korea, Japan, China and Canada)*
Economic Prospects of Asia Pacific Economics in the Medium Term
Franchising in Europe
Franchising in Latin America
How to Expand Your Franchise Network

SEPTEMBER 14, 2001 (Friday)
Makati Shangri-la Hotel

Global Trends and Innovations
Franchising Industry in the U.S.
Voices Experience: From the "Masters" of Franchising
Franchising as a Tool for Economic Development
Roles of Franchisors in the Shopping Mall

Track 1: FINANCE
Acquiring Capital to Build Your Franchise Network

Track 2: LEGAL
Structuring a Franchise Agreement
Arbitration as an Alternative Solution to Settle Disputes
Workshop on Legal Aspects in Franchising.
* Unidroit Law

Track 3: MARKETING AND DEVELOPMENT
Supporting Your Franchisees: Strategies That Build Winning Relationships
Motivating and Retaining Your Best Employees
Re-EngineeringYour Franchise Network
Elements of Successful Franchising

Track 4: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
Using Internet Technolgy to Expand Your Business
eBusiness Strategies and Solutions

SPECIAL SESSION
September 14, 2001 (Friday) Makati Shangri-la Hotel

Franchise Sales and Marketing Strategies
Don Boroian, Chairman, Francorp International

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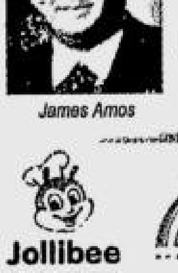
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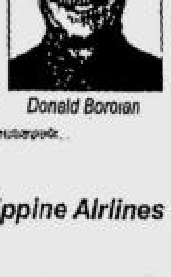
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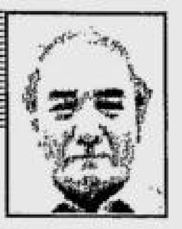
Retirees back SSS privatization

Part 2

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES



Honesto C. General

THE SSS strike—illegal and unconstitutional as it was—is over. But the issue of privatization that set off the illegal strike won't go away. The illegal strikers and their communist supporters themselves won't let it go.

Two days before Vitaliano Nañagas was kicked upstairs to the chairmanship of the Development Bank of the Philippines, I received a fax message from the office of my friend Horace Templo, SSS executive vice president. The message said SSS funds, collected from private sector employees and their employers' are public, not private.

I will not go into the specious reasons put forward by Templo who now claims, for the first time, that SSS funds are public. Let me simply quote from the Social Security Act of 1997: "No portion of the Investment Reserve Fund or income thereof shall accrue to the general fund of the National Government or to any of its agencies or instrumentalities, including government-owned or controlled corporations, except as may be allowed under this Act." The Investment Reserve Fund (IRF) is money not needed to meet current operating costs and benefit obligations.

Also, the law lists in great detail the areas where the IRF must be invested. A maximum 30 percent of the IRF can be invested in government securities, the balance of 70 percent in the private sector: private securities, housing, real estate-related industries, short and medium-term loans to members, and so forth. Actually, in 1999, only 19.7 percent of total investments went to the public sector. The balance went to the private sector: marketable securities (28.6 percent), housing loans (27.5 percent), members' loans (12.2 percent), business loans (8.2 percent) and real estate (3.8 percent). Some quarters have said that this heavy bias in favor of private investments breeds graft and corruption.

At any rate, SSS funds are private and investments have always been privatized. However, the SSS employees are public; they are government employees. Except for some who have signed up for voluntary membership, SSS employees do not contribute into SSS funds at all. They contribute to GSIS. No wonder they are, oh, so generous with SSS members' money that is not theirs.

As government employees, they are subject to civil service rules and the constitutional ban against staging strikes, walkouts and work stoppages even during lunch breaks. Those who broke these rules will have to suffer the consequences even if Malacañang has decided to be lenient.

At SSS, the in-house investment department carries out all investments. What Nañagas wanted to do was to allow outside fund managers to do some of the investing. Why are SSS employees against this? Because they will have less money to monkey around with?

The illegal strikers say the issue is more than loss of jobs. I don't believe this. The illegal strike was triggered by the complaint of President Macapagal-Arroyo that wages in government corporations are much too high. Let's look at the figures. In 1998, a year after the new SSS law was enacted freeing salaries from the stingy government salary standardization program, salaries were raised by a whopping P888.2 million. In 1999, salaries were increased again, by another P320.3 million. In 2000, salaries went up yet again by another P238.4 million. Over that three-year period, salaries soared by an astounding P1,446.9 million. Over that period, the 4,000 employees received an average windfall of an incredible P360,000 per head (the average pension in 1999 was P2,294).

If you were an SSS employee and you felt all that money was under threat, wouldn't you go screaming into the streets in a red T-shirt, waving a red flag?

The Philippine Association of Retired Persons (PARP) remains steadfast in its support of the reforms that Nañagas started. And PARP wishes the new SSS president Corazon de la Paz well. She will need all the help she can get.

WORKSHOP
27, 2001

SUBIC-CLARK ALLIANCE

The Bases Conversion Development Authority, Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, Clark Development Corp. and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) have taken the first step in laying the groundwork for the Subic-Clark Alliance Development (SCAD) Program, a priority project of the Macapagal administration. The alliance identified its vision and mission and mapped out its broad strategy during a Strategic Visioning and Planning Workshop held recently at the Subic freeport. The SCAD program is aimed at creating a synergy between Subic and Clark resulting in the complementation and sharing of resources, infrastructure and facilities between the two growth areas and propelling economic growth in Northern and Central Luzon. Present during the workshop were (from left) BCDA Chair Rogelio L. Singson, CDC president and CEO Emmanuel Y. Angeles, DTI Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II and SBMA Chair Felicito C. Payumo.

Cocktales . . .

From page B3

discount. "Without the discount, the customer will not purchase the airtime from (Twenty Plus)," Bello said.

The Starex/Exalta exchange deal is part of the P59.7-million offset arrangement approved by the Anson Roa board with media buyer Twenty Plus. In addition to the vans and car, Twenty Plus, said to be represented by one Antonio Flores of Dasmarinas Village, also paid Channel 13 with computers, printers, cell phones, and TV sets, all similarly overpriced by an average of 186 percent.

What is all the more strange in the overpriced offsetting arrangement is that, for example, the two Starex vans were bought way back in August 1999 but their board approval came only on January 9, 2001, when Edsa II was clearly underway.

The Starex vans, incidentally, were used by the Channel 13 board members themselves, according to insiders.

In addition to the vans, the Anson Roa board also voted to give Anson Roa, a political appointee, a retirement package hitherto reserved only to career executives. But that is another story.

Congested meadows

IF you happen to pass by Christ the King church in Green Meadows and glimpse a streamer protesting a "Paref" school, that cry for help was put up by residents of the exclusive subdivision aghast about a plan to build an Opus Dei school in the village park.

The Opus Dei—still secretive despite the public lectures of Opus Dei pontificator Bernardo Villegas about transparency – has somehow managed to convince Green Meadows developer Ortigas and Co. and then Quezon City Mayor Ismael Mathay Jr. to allow the congregation to build a school in the village park adjoining the church.

Green Meadows residents, who had bought lots and built homes in the area precisely to escape urban congestion, could not believe that the Opus Dei would subvert zoning regulations in the name of Christian education.

The corridor is already traffic-choked on Sundays; imagine what would happen Mondays to Fridays when a school for rich kids is added to the neighborhood. Expeditions, Pajeros, and Suburbans galore, not to mention sidewalk stalls that have now been sprouting in front of the church!

Heard through the grapevine

RENE Montemayor, the recently retired president of Ayala's Purefoods, is now working for the Universal Robina Corp.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

NOTICE TO DEPOSITORS OF THE CLOSED RURAL BANK OF AGDANGAN (Quezon), INC.

1. Starting August 7, 2001, the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC) thru its duly authorized representatives shall receive claims for insured deposits maintained with the closed **Rural Bank of Agdangan (Quezon), Inc.**
2. Depositors are requested to proceed directly to designated payoff sites on dates indicated in the schedule (please refer to table below), Monday thru Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., where PDIC representatives are stationed to accept claims and entertain queries of depositors:

Rural Bank of Agdangan Office/Branch	Payoff Site	Servicing Dates
Quezon, Head Office	RB Agdangan, Inc. - H.O. Sampayo St., Agdangan Quezon	Aug. 7 to Sept. 3, 2001
General Mariano Alvarez (GMA)	RB Agdangan, Inc. - GMA C1K, Lot 1, Blk 3, San Gabriel GMA Cavite	Aug. 7 to Sept. 3, 2001
Mendez	RB Agdangan, Inc. - Mendez Diamado St., Asis Mendez, Cavite	Aug. 7 to Aug. 22, 2001

3. Depositors are advised to present the following requirements to our representatives when filing their claims:
   a. Original evidence of deposit such as Savings Passbook and or Certificate of Time Deposit; and
   b. Latest identification document (ID) bearing the depositor's signature

   Other documents may be required by our representatives in the course of their processing of claims filed.
4. Pursuant to the provisions of R.A. 3591 as amended by R.A. 7400, the prescriptive date (last day) for filing of claims for insured deposits in the closed Rural Bank of Agdangan (Quezon), Inc. is on November 6, 2002. After November 6, 2002, PDIC as insurer, shall no longer accept any claim for insured deposits maintained with the said closed bank.

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

Like on a Ferris wheel

ON THE MONEY

John Mangun

DID you ever have the feeling that things were spinning out of control?

I will not comment on the merits of what happened at the SSS last week, but it is unusual at the least. One television station had a viewer poll on whether or not our society was moving from the rule of democracy to the rule of the mob. Many political philosophers have always characterized democracy as a system of mob rule. However, nevertheless, a democracy works not so much that the will of the people is supposed to be paramount but that there is a system and process by which, the peoples' will is enforced.

The most tragic example of the democratic will of the people being expressed without a system was the French revolution that overthrew the monarchy. Without the democratic system and process, there is anarchy regardless if the people's will is empowered or not.

I had lunch with a man last week that fears the same type of democratic anarchy could occur on the political front if the people become convinced that the government and the "system" have no chance of addressing the country's needs and wants.

Looking at the trading of the peso, I have the same "spinning" feeling. While the Bangko Sentral acts like it is helpless and talks like it is embarrassed, an interesting comment came out of Singapore on Friday. One currency analyst thought that the peso was UNDERVALUED and a BUY at 53. His analysis was that the Current Account surplus was more than twice the amount of the government budget deficit, which shows we have enough money to pay our bills. Also, he said that interest rates were high in the Philippines, making speculation in the dollar somewhat foolish. That is what I told you over the past two weeks. So, while locals are running to change pesos to dollars, this trader's firm is running to change dollars into pesos.

The stock market may be out of control too. Global broker Merrill Lynch announced that it was closing down from the Philippine Stock Exchange although its local partners are buying the trading facilities. After four years in this country, operating losses got so large that they felt it was time to pack up and leave.

Actually, I take the closure of these foreign brokers as a good sign. They have far too long dominated trading on the exchange and in a sense created a false impression of activity. The large amount of transactions that these firms do also can destabilize shares prices in that their orders, both buying and selling, can overwhelm the market. If Merrill dumps a few million shares into the market, prices can go down unreasonably. Further, the psychology of seeing the "great white foreign broker" buying or selling tends to add an element to the trading equation that is not necessary. I have always said that foreign participation or lack thereof was not critical to the exchange except for the trading fees generated by the stock exchange itself. They came, they made some money, and now they leave when profits drop. They are business friends only during the sunshine days and these capital market carpetbaggers are not needed. And remember this. The bulk of the foreign firms came in near the top of the market. I believe hindsight will prove that they are leaving near the bottom of the market.

Looking at the short-term stock market though, prices are heading substantially lower. The target for the Phisix is now at 1250. That is the point at which prices gapped from at the end of October 2000. However, I feel that we may even go lower than that area. We could easily fall to 1150, as this is where the real technical support lies. For example, if market heavyweight PLDT (TEL) falls any further than Friday's close of P610, then it could lose another P100 to around P500. Likewise, you can easily take another peso out of Ayala Corp. (AC), 25 out of MetroBank (MBT), and even five more pesos from Meralco (MERB). If these stocks fall to their major support levels, then we will see another 150 to 200 points come off the Phisix.

However, we still have some good stories coming from the market. San Miguel (SMC) reported another quarter of increasing earnings. Of course, the gloom and doomers keep harping on the fact that beer sales are mostly flat and the company is only making money from its acquisitions, but the profits keep rolling in. I still think the stock is below its value price. The worst kept secret (or rumor) on the exchange is that National Bookstore has taken a substantial stake in a listed technology investment holding company. There has been some speculation that they may be looking at some sort of backdoor listing although I would be surprised if that is the case. But I am usually wrong when it involves corporate takeovers. However, if National is putting big bucks into another listed company, there has to be a very good reason.

And something else that seems to be spinning right in to the wastebasket is the Securities Regulation Code, passed only last year. As I said then, it was a bad law in that it was unrealistic and poorly thought out. For example, it specifically bans stockbrokerage firms from trading in the market. However, the SEC has approved rules that would allow brokers to trade within specific guidelines to protect customers from any monkey business. The guidelines are good. But I think they go against the spirit and letter of the law. The PSE and SEC have wasted a year trying to make this bad law workable. It is much better to throw the thing away and start over using common sense. But it is a low priority now since senators cannot make the front page talking about stock market reform.

(John Mangun can be reached at 636-1121 to 35, Fax No. 634-2349 or e-mail at johnmangun@yahoo.com.)

Power firm rules out IPO this year

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE LOPEZ-CONTROLLED First Generation Holdings Corp. has ruled out this year its plan to conduct an initial public offering, which would have allowed foreign firms a minority stake in it, due to the downturn of the local economy.

First Generation president Peter Garrucho said in an interview last week the IPO was "not possible within the year" and that it was "still a long way off."

"The financial environment should first be strong. (Right now) the market is weak," he said.

The peso closed at 53.45 last Friday, down 4.8 percent from the start of the year while the Philippine Stock Exchange composite index dropped to its lowest level in nine months to 1,328.17.

In an earlier interview, Garrucho said they were in talks with at least three groups for a possible minority stake in First Generation.

Each group would have a stake of between 7 and 10 percent, he said.

The former tourism secretary said First Generation was valued at more than $500 million and that they have not decided whether to list in the PSE or elsewhere.

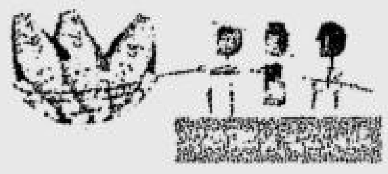
"(Our attraction is that we are) a holding company for four power plants and that we have a growth story," he explained.

Garrucho said First Generation, having assets with a combined capacity of 1,800 megawatts, was the third largest player in the electricity industry.

He said the acquisition of more power plants would depend on whether the firm would be able to buy one of National Power Corp.'s generation companies or gencos.

Napocor would start the privatization of its assets early next year.

Garrucho said they were looking at a Luzon-based genco in view of the developing natural gas industry in Batangas, where the yield from the Malampaya gas fields would be landed.



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Stocks seen hitting new lows

MARKET PLAY

By Doris C. Dumlao

LOCAL stocks will continue trading with a downward bias this week amid a dearth of any incentive to bounce back even after hitting their lowest levels since the "juetengate" scandal 10 months ago, analysts say.

After dropping by another 1.7 percent to 1,328.17, most analysts expect the main-share Philippine Stock Exchange composite index to test more support levels this week in the absence of any good news that would attract the bulls to instead breach the resistance levels.

Traders said the market continued to be depressed by a confluence of negative developments, such as the withdrawal of more brokerage firms, including top broker Merrill Lynch and Citicorp-Salomon, a tax case that could cost index heavyweight Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. some P1.6 billion, the country's poor export performance and the generally poor corporate earnings outlook for the second quarter.

Analysts said, however, that although the market was still bound to head south, it might start to bottom out should bargain-hunters become bolder in picking up oversold stocks.

"We are looking for the market to settle between 1,250 and 1,300," BPI Securities analyst Spencer Yap said. "Buyers have been poised to accumulate but have been beaten back repeatedly as foreign selling has continued to keep share prices and the index low."

"We expect the market to maintain its negative bias. However, buying should step up as we hit major support levels. Whether or not this technical bounce can be sustained will depend ultimately on improvements in economic and corporate performance in the second half," he said.

Eagle Equities president Joseph Roxas said there could still be more selling pressures this week, but a rebound might happen soon as the market was beginning to hit its bottom.

ATR Kim Eng Securities said it expected the Phisix to hit the next technical target of 1,300 and then 1,270 next week.

"Government financial institutions remain sidelined despite the resolution of the crisis at the Social Security System, which ended with the removal of administrator Vitaliano Nañagas. Although his replacement, Corazon de la Paz, is a respected businessperson and is expected to continue with the reforms he initiated, there is a perception that the government caved in to demands of employees wanting to retain the status quo rather that standing firm on the reform agenda espoused by the Macapagal administration," ATR Kim Eng said.

Although the market was still bound for further decline, Philstocks.net said there had been a lack of conviction on the sellers' side as the market had been drifting lower on thin volume.

"Although sellers are not too aggressive, the market is still seeing a gradual but consistent fall. Consequently, the Phisix is close to being technically oversold as it has now made at least nine session lows. And with a number of index issues close to touching their 52-week lows, we should see more technical bounces within the downtrend," Philstocks.net said.

The market is expected to continue keeping track of developments here and abroad. Among the major economic reports to watch out for this week is the July inflation report.

"Inflation is expected to inch up due to the spike in food prices when typhoon Feria whipped the country in early July. Feria's damage to agricultural crops, livestock and fisheries was estimated at P947.4 million. A spike in inflation may put more pressure on interest rates," Philstocks.net said.

"For the medium term, the likely course for the market is more of what we have had over the last two weeks. Stocks would be locked in a narrow downward channel for some time, given that there would be few positive catalysts to move the market in the coming month. For the longer term, a lot will depend on the next six months. If encouraging signs begin to prop up, then we should see quick reactions from the market. Wait for confidence to build up before getting aggressive in the market."

The blue chips that ended lower last week were Ayala Corp., Ayala Land Inc., Meralco A and B, SM Prime Holdings Inc. and PLDT. The second-liners were Fil-Invest Land Inc., Fil-Invest Development Corp., Pilipino Telephone Corp., International Container Services Terminal Inc. and Metro Pacific Corp.

The few gainers last week were boosted by specific developments, such as Manulife Financial Corp. and Belle Corp. Manulife was buoyed by the rise in its New York shares while Belle rose close to 10 percent week-on-week after the signing of a definitive deal with retail tycoon Henry Sy to pare down its debts as well as with the news of more investors joining its leisure estate spin-off project.

Alliance Tech to invest $12M to expand call-center business

INFORMATION technology firm Alliance Technologies Corp., the cash cow of the Panlilio family's publicly listed Boulevard Holdings Inc., is prepared to invest up to $12 million (P636 million) to expand its call center business.

"There has been a huge influx of call centers in the Philippines from the United States. This is where we're putting our bets," Boulevard Holdings president Nicole Morris told reporters during a cocktail party hosted by the company for visiting State Street Global Advisors president Thomas Harbert.

Morris said Boulevard Holdings, which now derived 65 percent of its revenues from Alliance Technology, would soon want to devote 70 percent of its total portfolio to IT-related businesses. Right now, the bulk of its exposure was in the property business.

In a separate interview, Alliance Technology president Francis Patron explained that the company would invest to beef up capacity and capture more growth opportunities.

"In the next 12 months, we're investing a low of $1 million to $12 million depending on the growth," Patron said.

"Right now, we are able to calculate the need for the call center business. But if the Philippine turns around and all multinationals start ordering from us, it will be necessary to sustain the growth," he added.

Contribution from Alliance Technology's call center business has increased to 60 percent of its total revenues from only 30 percent. The company is also the biggest Philippine distributor of voice/fax mail systems, PABX and other communication applications of Avaya Communications, a unit of Lucent Technologies.

A call center is a central place where the customer and other telephone calls are handled by an organization, usually with some amount of computer automation. Typically, a call center has the ability to handle a considerable volume of calls at the same time, to screen calls and forward them to those qualified to handle them as well as to log calls. Call centers are also usually used by mail-order catalogue organizations, telemarketing companies, computer product help desk and any large organization that uses the telephone to sell products and services.

Caltex wants Clean Air Act deferred

By Ronnel W. Domingo

CALTEX Philippines Inc. said Friday that it would ask the government to defer the implementation of the second phase of the Clean Air Act, saying it would need time to retool its refinery.

Caltex Philippines chair Nicholas Florio told reporters that retooling its refinery would cost Caltex Philippines, the country's third-largest oil firm, some $150 million, an amount he described as not "economically justifiable."

"It is a real concern to us," Florio said.

The Clean Air Act seeks to reduce environmentally harmful substances in gasoline and diesel. It requires oil refiners to cut the aromatic and benzene contents of gasoline from 45 percent and 4 percent to 35 percent and 2 percent by 2003. It also mandates the reduction of sulphur in diesel from 0.2 percent to 0.05 percent by 2004.

The first phase of the law was implemented late last year with the removal of leaded gasoline.

Florio said Caltex Philippines still had to decide whether to invest in new facilities or import products that would comply with the law.

This decision would have to be made in view of whether the implementation of the law would be deferred, he said.

"Right now, importing might be a better option, but we do not want to do that because we have a refinery with 200 people," he said.

Caltex Philippines' refinery in San Pascual, Batangas, can process up to 72,000 barrels of oil per day.

"If we are forced to make that investment, we have to look at the long-term viability of that refinery," Florio added.

He said full compliance with the law would push pump prices by about P2 per liter.

"That's just too much, and we know we cannot pass it on. We are not sure whether consumers are willing to pay that much more," he said.

Florio said Caltex would then have to absorb those costs. That "would be very difficult," he said.

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6	CELEBRITY SPORTS CLUB	please call	-
7	COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	480 000 00	-
8	EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	380 000 00	350,000 00
9	EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "B"	550 000 00	-
10	MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	380 000 00	-
11	MANILA POLO CLUB	3 200 000 00	-
12	MANILA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB (Individual)	14,000 000 00	-
13	MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "A"	850 000 00	700,000 00
14	MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "B"	900,000 00	-
15	MONTEMAR BEACH CLUB	-	30,000 00
16	MT MALARAYAT "B"	450 000 00	-
17	ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "C"	600 000 00	-
18	PUERTO AZUL BEACH CLUB	160 000 00	-
19	PUNTA FUEGO (IND)	845,000 00	-
20	PHIL COLUMBIAN ASSOCIATION	-	85 000 00
21	QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	-	235,000 00
22	RIVIERA GOLF CLUB "A"	250 000 00	-
23	SUBIC YATCH CLUB	750,000 00 all in	-
24	SPLENDIDO	600 000 00	-
25	SHERWOOD HILLS "B"	350 000 00	-
26	TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS INT'L GOLF CLUB	1,000 000 00	-
27	TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS GOLF CLUB	800 000 00	-
28	VALLE VERDE COUNTRY CLUB (Individual)	190 000 00	-
29	VALLE VERDE COUNTRY CLUB (Corporate)	330 000 00	-
30	VALLEY GOLF CLUB	320 000 00	-
31	VERDEMAR GOLF CLUB, INC (CEBU)	please call	-
32	WACK WACK GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	8,400 000 all in	-
33	THE COUNTRY CLUB	please call	-
34	OTHERS	please call	-

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GG & A Club Shares
SEC License Broker #007575 * As of August 6, 2001

CLUB	BUYER	SELLER
Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	Please Call	1,850,000
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	-	2,300,000
Baguio Country Club	-	750,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	-	115,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	125,000
Camp John Hay	Please Call	400,000
Canlubang	-	850,000
Canyonwoods	-	350,000
Capitol Hills	130,000	140,000
Cebu Country Club	1,900,000	2,000,000
Celebrity Sports Club	-	Please Call
Club Filipino	-	300,000
Eagle Ridge "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Eastridge "A"	Please Call	Please Call
Evercrest "A"	100,000	110,000
Forest Hills "A"	200,000	235,000
Forest Hills "B"	-	250,000
Forest Hills "C"	-	400,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	-	350,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	-	350,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	17,000,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	-	14,000,000
Manila Polo	3,200,000	Please Call
Manila Southwoods "A"	750,000	800,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	-	900,000
Metropolitan Club "A"	150,000	-
Metropolitan Club "B"	-	170,000
Mimosa Golf & Country Club (Corporate)	-	350,000
Montemar (Individual)	-	30,000
Mt. Malarayat	300,000	350,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"	-	280,000
Orchard Golf Club "B"	-	350,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	-	500,000
Philippine Columbian	-	85,000
Pueblo de Oro "A"/"B"/"C"	-	Please Call
Puerto Azul	-	170,000
Quezon City Sports Club	215,000	230,000
Riviera Golf & Country Club "A"	-	200,000
Royale Tagaytay "A/B/C"	Please Call	Please Call
Sherwood Hills "A"	-	200,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,825,000	1,850,000
Sta. Elena "B"	2,200,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	-	450,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	240,000
Tagaytay Country Club	380,000	450,000
Tagaytay Highlands	900,000	950,000
Tagaytay Midlands	-	845,000
Valle Verde (Individual)	190,000	200,000
Valley Golf	260,000	275,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	8,000,000	8,400,000

PLAYING RIGHTS
(Available Lessees)
Manila Golf 450,000

(Available Lessors)

Alabang "A"	40,000	Mimosa Golf	20,000
Calatagan "A"	10,000	Orchard "A"	20,000
Canlubang	70,000	Riviera "A"	15,000
Eagleridge	30,000	Tagaytay CC	30,000
Eastridge "A"	20,000	Tagaytay Golf	65,000
Forest Hills	30,000	Tagaytay Mid.	40,000
Manila Southwoods	40,000	Tivoli Royale	20,000
Makati Sports "A"	35,000	Valley Golf	20,000
Manila Golf	500,000	Wack-Wack	90,000

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SELLING:

Alabang A/B	1.730M/1.5M
Baguio Country Club	750,000
Calatagan A/B	100,000
Camp John Hay Golf	350,000
Canlubang Golf	800,000
Canyon Woods	280,000
Celebrity	205,000
Club Filipino	250,000
CC at Tagaytay Highland	395,000
Eagle A/B/C	Please call
Fontana ABCD	Please call
Forest Hills "A"	240/260/400
Manila Golf (Indv.)/Corp	14M/16.5M
Manila Polo	3.3M
Manila Southwoods "A"/B	790/900
Makati Sports A/B	250,000
Metropolitan "B"	160,000
Mimosa/Lusita/Royale Tagaytay	Please call
Mt. Malarayat "A"	320,000
Orchard "A"/B/C	250/350/500
Puerto Azul	150,000
Quezon City Sports	230,000
Riviera "A"	200/350/550
Sherwood A/B/C	220/250/Please call
Sta. Elena A/B	1.850M/Please call
Subic	Please call
Tagaytay Highland Golf	930,000
Tagaytay Highland Club	395,000
Valle Verde CC	190,000
Tagaytay Midlands	750,000
Valley Golf	260,000
Wack Wack	8,275,000

BUYING:

Alabang A/B	1.7M/Please call
Baguio Country Club	725,000
Camp John Hay Golf	325,000
Capitol Hills	135,000
Celebrity	200,000
Eagle Ridge A	350,000
Eagle Ridge C	620,000
Forest Hill "A"	240/260/400
Manila Golf (Indv.)/Corp.	13.5M/15M
Manila Polo	3.3M
Manila Southwoods "A"/B	790/900
Makati Sports A/B	350,000
Metropolitan "A"	150,000
Mt. Malarayat C	Please call
Orchard "A"/B/C	250/350/500
Quezon City Sports	220,000
Sta. Elena A/B	1.850M
Sherwood C	500,000
Tagaytay Highland Golf	900,000
Tagaytay Highland Club	395,000
Tagaytay Midlands	750,000
Valley Golf	250,000
Wack Wack	8,200,000

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CLUB	SELLING	BUYING
Alabang A	1,850,000	Pls. Cal
Baguio CC	Pls. Cal	Pls. Cal
Capitol Hills	140,000	125,000
Camp John Hay	350,000	Pls. Cal
Canyon Woods	400,000	-
Celebrity Sports	205,000	Pls. Cal
The Country Club	7,000,000	-
Eagleridge-A	450,000	375,000
Eagleridge-B	650,000	Pls. Cal
Evercrest	130,000	-
Filipinas Golf	350,000	300,000
Fontana C	140,000	-
Fontana D	90,000	-
Forest Hills A	240,000	Pls. Cal
Malarayat	450,000	Pls. Cal
Manila Golf	15,000,000	-
Manila Polo	3,500,000	3,000,000
Manila Southwoods A	800,000	Pls. Cal
Manila Southwoods B	900,000	-
Mimosa A	200,000	-
Mimosa C2	300,000	-
Orchard	300,00	Pls. Cal
Riviera	250,000	-
Sherwood	260,000	-
Sta Elena	2,000,000	1,800,000
Subic Golf	310,000	Pls. Cal
Tagaytay CC	450,000	-
Tagaytay Midlands	830,000	-
Tagaytay Highlands	1,100,000	900,000
Tivoli Royale	220,000	Pls. Cal
Valle Verde	190,000	-
Wack-wack	8,500,000	8,000,000

Playing Rights available lessor

Alabang	60,000	Tagaytay CC	40,000
Eagleridge	50,000	Tagaytay Midlands	50,000
Orchard	Best Buy!	Tagaytay Highlands	50,000
Manila Southwoods	50,000	Wack-wack	60,000

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Friday, Aug. 3, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	66	66.5	66	66	27,200
China Banking Corp.	620	620	620	620	1,870
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	35	35	35	35	5,300
First E-Bank Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	5,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	209	210	206	210	21,260
Philippine National Bank	47	47.5	45.5	46.5	431,400
Security Bank Corp.	19	19.5	19	19.5	2,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	24.75	24.75	24.75	24.75	1,000
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	240	244	240	244	280
Manulife Financial Corp.	1610	1630	1610	1630	2,820
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1315	1315	1305	1310	3,710
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	38	38	38	38	9,900
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.48	0.48	0.47	0.47	410,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	660	660	650	660	3,750
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.037	0.037	0.037	0.037	1,000,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	14,150,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.7	3.9	3.7	3.9	11,000
Piltel	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	200,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	290,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	640	640	600	610	170,620
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.035	0.036	0.033	0.035	151,700,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	35	35	35	35	19,300
Manila Electric Co. B	42	42	41	41.5	944,400
Petron Corp.	1.84	1.84	1.82	1.84	1,137,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	5,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.1	2.12	2.06	2.06	2,311,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Fortune Cement Corp.	0.13	0.14	0.13	0.14	130,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	380,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	5.8	5.9	5.8	5.9	1,794,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	16,700
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	27	28.5	27	28.5	9,300
RFM Corp.	2.4	2.5	2.4	2.5	9,677,000
San Miguel Corp. A	42.5	42.5	42	42.5	108,100
San Miguel Corp. B	55.5	55.5	54.5	55	148,400
HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	10,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	40,000
Ayala Corp.	6.1	6.1	6	6	535,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	10,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	1.1	1.14	1.06	1.12	2,910,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	500,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.008	0.0085	0.008	0.0085	139,000,000
Anglo Phil. Holdings Corp.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	200,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs.	0.2	0.21	0.2	0.21	300,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	200
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	170,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.78	1.78	1.76	1.78	1,516,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	20,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.26	110,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.86	0.86	280,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	28.5	28.5	28	28	244,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	20,000
Guoco Holdings (Phils.)	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	50,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.98	2	1.98	2	151,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	5,060,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.68	0.69	0.68	0.69	570,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	480,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	720,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	25,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.22	0.24	0.22	0.24	310,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	10,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.28	0.3	0.28	0.29	2,410,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Active Alliance Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	40,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.9	1	0.9	0.95	720,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	50,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	14.25	15	14.25	15	11,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.58	0.58	0.56	0.56	1,360,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	200,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.45	0.5	0.45	0.49	260,000
Philippine Racing Club	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	2,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	38.5	39	38.5	38.5	133,500
Equitable PCI Bank-War	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.82	10,000
Jollibee Warrants	13	13	13	13	19,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,400
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.019	0.019	0.017	0.018	323,100,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	7	7	7	7	21,000
Far Eastern University	380	380	375	375	660
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.85	4.85	4.8	4.85	5,572,000
Cityland Development Corp.	3	3	3	3	20,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	110,000
Cebu Prop. Vent B	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	1,000,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	700,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	130,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.88	1.88	1.88	1.88	661,000
City & Land Developers	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.21	0.21	340,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.02	2.02	2.02	2.02	2,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.1	6.2	6.1	6.2	1,341,000
MINING					
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.047	0.05	0.046	0.05	36,800,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines B	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	300,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	7,500,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.39	0.39	0.38	0.38	630,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.4	0.4	0.39	0.4	2,800,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.02	0.02	0.019	0.019	33,700,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	2,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	10,000
Pacifica	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	6,000,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	501,840	37,441,460.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	666,466,430	259,524,020.00
PRO	9,878,000	37,242,470.00
Mining	48,030,000	3,309,400.00
OIL	41,710,000	751,400.00
GRAND TOTALS:	766,610,270	338,318,790.00

AVERAGES

Banks & Fin Svc	552.31	DOWN 0.52
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,882.17	DOWN 29.16
PRO	502.36	UP 9.84
Mining	1,288.06	UP 6.51
OIL	1.77	UP 0.03
All Shares Index	822.02	UP 0.84
Composite	1,328.17	DOWN 13.39

NO. OF ADVANCES: 27; NO. OF DECLINES: 23; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 47;
NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 97; NO. OF TRADES: 2,285

CURRENCIES

Aug. 3, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.130966	1.000000	53.6670
Japan	Yen	0.009150	0.008090	0.4342
United Kingdom	Pound	1.620448	1.432800	76.8941
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.145010	0.128218	6.8811
Switzerland	Franc	0.661771	0.585138	31.4026
Canada	Dollar	0.737170	0.651806	34.9805
Singapore	Dollar	0.635553	0.561956	30.1585
Australia	Dollar	3.000069	2.652661	142.3604
Bahrain	Dinar	3.000069	2.652661	142.3604
Kuwait	Dinar	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.301566	0.266645	14.3100
Brunei	Dollar	0.625361	0.552944	29.6748
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000118	0.000104	0.0056
Thailand	Baht	0.024796	0.021925	1.1766
UAE	Dirham	0.307997	0.272331	14.6152
Korea	Won	0.000884	0.000782	0.0420
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.884200	47.4524
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.452084	24.2620
France	Franc	0.152450	0.134795	7.2340
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.401232	21.5329
Austria	Schilling	0.072672	0.064257	3.4485
Belgium	Franc	0.024790	0.021919	1.1763
Italy	Lire	0.000517	0.000457	0.0245
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.148712	7.9809
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.00441	0.2367
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005314	0.2852
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024790	0.021919	1.1763
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.122702	60.2520

Gov't OKs Ford's Aico project

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE BOARD of Investments has given the green light to Ford Motor Co.'s $500-million production sharing scheme between its Philippine and Thailand subsidiaries.

The BOI's approval, however, was hinged on a condition that the American automotive giant would ensure that 40 percent of the assembled Ford and Mazda units were components made in the two countries.

Ford's project is the first under the Asean Industrial Cooperation (Aico) scheme where the proponent has been allowed to trade fully assembled goods instead of mere components for assembly.

Ford, through Ford Motor Co. Philippines Inc., is planning to assemble the Escape and Tribute sport utility vehicles and the Laser/Lynx/Mazda 323 sedans at its Sta. Rosa plant for export to Thailand.

In turn, Ford's Thailand subsidiary, Auto Alliance Co. Ltd. (where Ford has a 48-percent interest and Mazda Motors of Japan has 45 percent) would ship Ranger pickup trucks to the Philippines. Ford had originally planned to ship some of its Philippine output to Indonesia and bring in Volvo sedans from its Thai plant to the Philippines.

Based on its 5-year plan, Ford is expected to ship $278.558 million worth of CBUs to Thailand while bringing in $272.332 million worth of CBUs and parts to the Philippines. The BOI said the Philippine subsidiary would yield $126 million in net foreign exchange inflows.

By shipping its CBUs through Aico, Ford will only pay between zero and 5 percent on its products compared with the prevailing CBU duties of 20 percent and 15 percent in the Philippines and Thailand, respectively. Ford is likely to enjoy these perks if plans to grant duty-free status to Aico projects at the start of the Asean Free Trade Area (where duties on traded goods will be pegged at no higher than 5 percent) in 2003 push through.

The BOI justified its decision to grant perks to Ford by noting that CBUs were "critical to the future success of Afta implementation" and that these were scheduled for tariff cuts in the upcoming Afta except for Malaysia which wanted a longer period for tariff cuts to protect its national car, the Proton.

But while the BOI said it would strictly impose the minimum 40 percent cumulative Asean content requirement, the agency did not elaborate on how it could effectively enforce this rule considering that the scheme involves two assembly plants controlled by Ford.

The BOI had previously stated that the regional content requirement was crucial in blocking companies from the US, Japan, China and Europe from using Aico as a backdoor to dump their imports into Asean.

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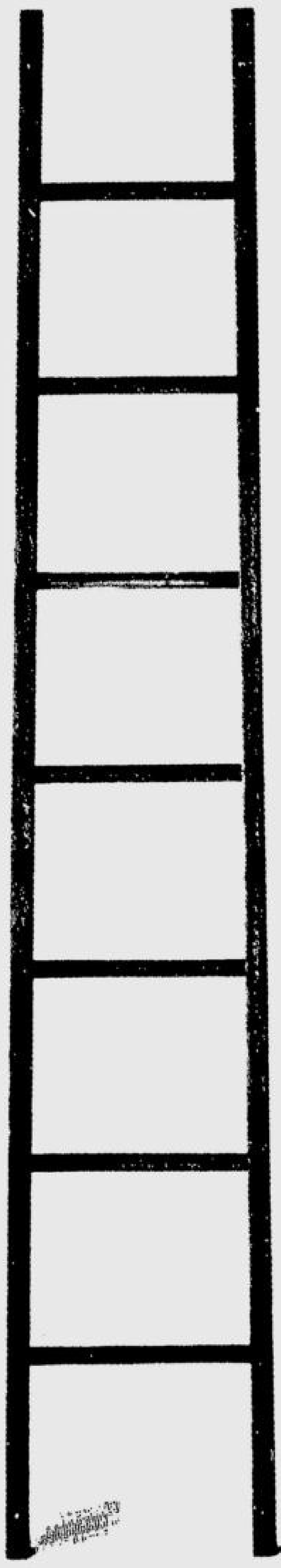

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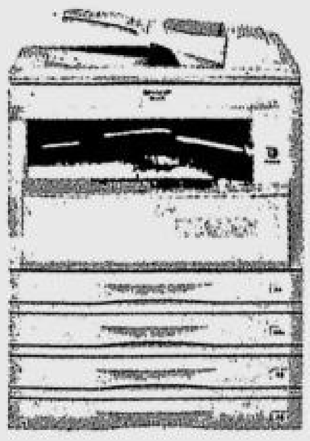

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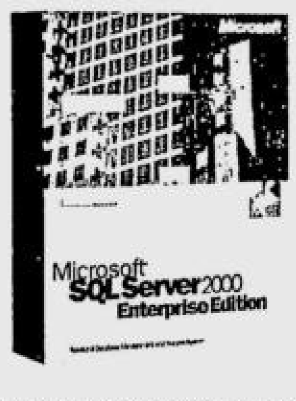

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TEMPERED EXPECTATIONS

Most on Wall St. see August Fed cut as last

NEW YORK—Most leading Wall Street firms expect a widely anticipated Federal Reserve interest rate cut later this month will be the last one for the year, according to a Reuters poll.

The poll was conducted after a better-than-expected government employment report for July tempered market expectations of multiple rate cuts in the remainder of the year. The unemployment rate last month was unchanged from June's 4.5 percent, below forecasts of a slight rise to 4.6 percent.

The survey found all 25 primary dealers of US government securities—firms that deal directly with the Fed in money market operations—expected the central bank's policy-setting committee to lower its key lending rate from 3.75 percent to 3.50 percent on Aug. 21.

16 of the 25 said a move in August would be the last for the year, while nine expected at least one more cut in October in the federal funds rate on overnight bank lending.

"The view was building in the market that there was a pretty good chance the Fed would ease again after August," said Dana Johnson, senior managing director at Banc One Capital Markets. "The jobless claims numbers yesterday and the jobs report have really taken the wind out of that view."

Since the Fed's last rate cut on June 27, expectations for multiple rate cuts in the remainder of the year had been steadily rising in reaction to data showing that the economy barely grew in the second quarter and manufacturing activity in July showed no sign of recovering.

The economy turned in its weakest performance in eight years in the April-June quarter, with gross domestic product growing at an anemic 0.7-percent annual rate. In the past year, the economy has grown only slightly more than one percent.

Fed funds futures contracts, a gauge of bond market interest rate expectations, on Friday reflected about a 50-percent chance of another quarter-point reduction by November.

That was a sizable shift from the end of June, when markets saw less than a 50-percent chance of just one more cut this year in August.

The poll showed 16 of the 25 dealers expect fed funds to be at 3.5 percent by yearend while seven saw it at 3.25 percent and one put it at 3 percent. HSBC Securities was the only dealer predicting it would go as low as 2.75 percent.

The Fed has already slashed rates six times this year in a hurried campaign to keep the economy from slipping into recession and so far, it has been successful.

Fed Chair Alan Greenspan also had a hand in driving up rate-cutting expectations with his testimony to Congress in late July that there was still a risk of the economy weakening beyond what was currently anticipated.

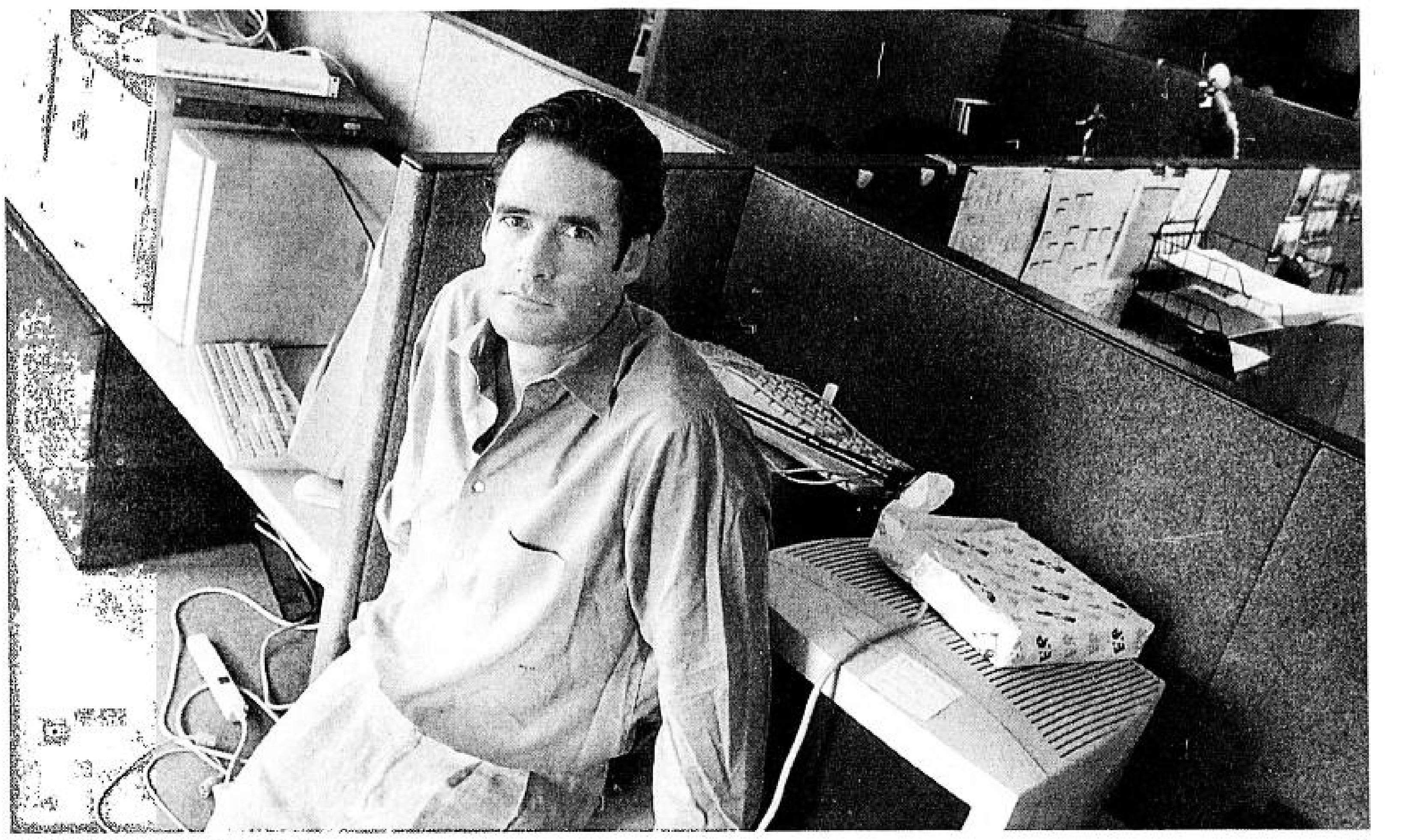
Economists said low inflation and falling commodity prices gave the Fed plenty of room to cut rates further and even overshoot in easing credit.

Meanwhile, the next big debate over Fed policy is already starting to brew, with many economists wondering how long the Fed will hold rates down once they reach a trough.

Eurodollar futures, another barometer of rate expectations, are showing markets expect the Fed will raise rates at least a couple of times next year.

"I think that's the right view actually," said Johnson. "In all of the business cycles prior to the 1990-91 cycle, the Fed very quickly began tightening again." Johnson predicted the Fed would raise rates by between half a percentage point to a full point by the end of next year.

According to Deutsche Banc Alex.Brown, the average period between the end of a rate-cutting cycle and the start of a rate-hiking cycle has been nine months since Greenspan took over the Fed in 1987. *Reuters*



CORPORATE CUTBACKS AP

Michael McCracken, chief financial officer of UGO Networks Inc., poses in his New York office. In an effort to trim expenses, the Web-based entertainment portal is tightening its belt cutting back on office perks like flavored coffee.

Still no sign of new cash for Argentina

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina—Argentina on Friday clinched key International Monetary Fund support for faster aid payments to help it fend off fears of impending debt default, but there was no sign of new cash on the horizon.

Visiting US Treasury official John Taylor said only that talks with the Argentine government had been "fruitful and detailed" while local officials knocked down speculation Latin America's No.3 economy had asked for top-up aid in the first place.

Markets had guessed no fresh funding would come out of Friday's talks with Taylor after a White House spokesman said US President George W. Bush, Britain's Tony Blair and Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar said they backed Argentina's reforms but that it should focus on its existing IMF program.

Argentine officials addressed media speculation that Taylor's talks with President Fernando de la Rua and Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo had been disappointing by saying "no announcements had been expected." De la Rua, meanwhile, echoed the "fruitful" line of Taylor.

"We have not asked for financial (bilateral) aid from any government or group of countries," a haggard Cabinet chief Chrystian Colombo said after the talks. "The government is working with multilateral credit organizations and intends to continue to do so."

"We believe that with this, we have given all the American administration an illustration of what the situation is in Argentina and we hope we have met their requirements and answered their questions," he added.

But while markets had been waiting for signs the IMF would speed up an accelerated $1.2-billion payout in August, as the lender's chief, Horst Koehler, said Friday the management would recommend, another obstacle beset Argentina's new austerity drive.

An Argentine labor court ruled unconstitutional unpopular cuts of up to 13 percent to state salaries and some pensions, aimed at helping erase the budget deficit and enabling the state to continue servicing its $128 billion public debt—suspending the application of the measures to the workers of four unions.

Markets now want concrete proof the government will stick to recent unpopular public spending cuts aimed at pulling the economy out of crisis after a three-year slump.

"The most important thing (for the market) is to see the government's will to implement these (austerity) measures," said Alfredo Ferrarini of Cohen brokerage in Buenos Aires.

Earlier in the week, concerns about the steady exit of bank deposits and reserves by nervous Argentine savers had sent another round of jitters through the markets.

But gloom over Argentina, which began late last year when the ruling alliance coalition suffered major defections and fears emerged that a prolonged economic downturn endangered its solvency, lifted slightly after strong foreign support rallied behind Argentina this week.

There was good news for Brazil, which looked set to receive a $15-billion IMF loan, which should in turn ease market fears major crisis in Argentina would take its neighbor under. *Reuters*

No profit turnaround forecast until yearend

NEW YORK—It's official. Wall Street no longer expects Corporate America to turn the corner this year.

The US economy and corporate profits were expected to turn around in the fourth quarter, but Wall Street analysts now forecast US companies would report flat earnings in the period amid a sluggish economy and lackluster sales, according to market research firm Thomson Financial/First Call.

"I'm not surprised. Just read the economic tea leaves," said Louis Navellier, who oversaw $6 billion for Navellier & Associates.

Analysts now expect companies in the Standard & Poor's 500 index to report no profit growth in the fourth quarter, according to First Call. That is a far cry from the growth of 12.6 percent expected just four months ago. It would be the first time since 1991 when the US economy was mired in recession, that corporate profits had been flat or lower for four consecutive quarters.

An uptick in profits has now been shoved out to the first quarter of 2002. Analysts predict growth of 10.2 percent for the January-March period. This, too, may fall through, according to First Call analyst Joe Cooper.

"Could we go negative? Yeah, if the economy stays in the same shape as now. If some parts don't recover," Cooper said. "But I imagine some will (recover). I expect we'll see low single-digit growth."

Some money managers agree, saying the US Federal Reserve's six interest rate cuts, combined with a tax cut, will soon jumpstart the economy and corporate profits.

"We're moving into a period where economic growth will start to improve," said John Zimmerman, senior vice president and director of growth strategies at Banc of America Capital Management Inc. "We're within a couple of months of starting to see better growth. Now is the time for investors to be seriously looking at equities, particularly at equities more on the growth side as the economy gets traction from these interest rate cuts." *Reuters*

Thai SEC hits 'boiler' scams

BANGKOK, Thailand—Thailand's securities watchdog announced Friday that it had asked police to file criminal charges against seven men who allegedly ran Bangkok-based stock trading firms that tried to scam investors.

The Securities and Exchange Commission said in a faxed statement that its accusations against the illegal businesses, which mainly operated under the name of the Brinton Group, were filed with the Office of the Economic Crime Investigation Division of the Thai police department. It was the SEC's second request to file charges.

The SEC alleged that the seven men headed stock brokerage firms without a license from the Thai government. It said they sought to sell shares of nonexistent or shaky companies to investors, mostly in Australia and New Zealand. They are John Martin Kealy, Ronan Joseph Murray, Paul Mary Hickey, Scott Campbell Fisher, Jason Garrick Rich, Adrian Robert Wallis and Steven Hooper.

The SEC provided no details about them, although Hickey, an Irishman, and Fisher, an Australian, are in custody. *AP*

Canada still outperforming US in employment creation

TORONTO—Canada's jobs market, reeling from mammoth cuts at tech and auto firms and at the country's main airline, is still faring better than the slowdown-plagued United States, but the good times could be coming to an end.

Economists and labor market experts say Canada has so far escaped relatively unscathed from the slowdown that started in the United States and is spreading to other countries.

But about one in 10 manufacturing, transportation and durable goods companies plans to cut jobs in the current quarter and maybe also in the winter months, according to a survey from Manpower Inc.'s Canadian operations.

The downward trend, however, would be offset by new jobs in retail and other services, said the survey, based on interviews with 1,700 companies.

"Canada will see job creation at a healthy rate in the third quarter, better than the US, but it will clearly weaken as we go into the fourth quarter," said Steve Walker, who heads the temporary staffing firm's Canadian operations.

Already, telecoms giant Nortel Networks Corp. has said it will lay off nearly a third of its global workforce, or 30,000 jobs.

JDS Uniphase, the world's largest maker of fiber-optic components, will slash 16,000 people globally, or more than half of its workforce.

Sierra Wireless, Celestica and a slew of smaller tech and telecoms firms have also announced layoffs.

On top of that downturn, Air Canada, by far the nation's dominant carrier, said last week it planned to cut another 4,000 jobs, or 10 percent of its workforce, after a sharp drop in business travel triggered a deeper-than-expected second-quarter loss. *Reuters*

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Internet's productivity boost to wane, says Fed

WASHINGTON—Federal Reserve Governor Edward Gramlich said Friday that the gains to worker productivity from the spread of Internet access were likely to wane eventually, though that drop-off was likely to be in the far future.

In a largely academic speech to be delivered in San Antonio at a conference on trade and the New Economy, Gramlich did not touch on the state of the US economy or monetary policy. Instead, he delved into the role of infrastructure in boosting productivity—the amount of goods or services a worker can create in a given period.

"Like other networks, the Internet significantly raised the productivity of each and every computer. The more Internet users there are, the more valuable each Internet connection and the more valuable the information that can be disseminated over the Internet," Gramlich said in his prepared remarks released here.

"And like the interstate highway system, the effects of the Internet on productivity growth are likely to wane over time—although it seems that we have a long way to go before these particular marginal benefits taper off."

The US saw a surge in productivity in recent years, a gain many, including Fed Chair Alan Greenspan, attributed to more efficient use of high tech goods that had allowed firms to produce more and maintain smaller inventories.

Productivity figures for the second quarter are due out Tuesday.

While Gramlich said government can often build infrastructure to encourage private investment, he also warned that it needed to be careful when setting standards for new technologies.

"There is often a fine line between setting standards that promote competition and setting standards that provide an unfair advantage for incumbent firms. A limited role for government may be best—but even then, it may be hard to define precisely that role," he said. *Reuters*

GMA to seek KL's backing on tariff issues

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal–Arroyo will go to Malaysia this week hoping to seek the Malaysian government's support to the Philippines' bid to delay tariff cuts on petrochemical products under the Asean's Common Effective Preferential Tariff (Cept) scheme.

The President will also try to convince the Malaysian government to agree to the proposed re-opening of National Steel Corp.

Trade Secretary Manuel "Mar" Roxas II said NSC's revival by a lease operator and the proposed delay in the liberalization of the importation of petrochemical products in the Philippines were among the top priority in the President's business agenda.

He said Macapagal's first state visit was aimed at further strengthening bilateral trade ties between Malaysia and the Philippines that have been soured by the dispute between NSC's majority owner, Renong-Hottick of Malaysia, and local creditor banks following the closure of NSC's Iligan plant in November 1999.

Roxas said the Philippines was keen on getting the consent of Malaysia's privatization agency, which has taken over Renong's assets including NSC, on its plan to get an interim investor to run NSC while they await the entry of a long-term investors and for the Securities and Exchange Commission to rule on the dispute over the company's rehabilitation program. He said the government has already received the clearance from NSC management committee head Ibrahim Bidn of Malaysia.

The Macapagal administration has formed an eight-member committee to oversee the bidding for a controlling interest in NSC. Swiss metals trader Glencore International, Cathay Pacific Steel Co. (Capasco), and Allengoal Steel Fabrication & Trading have been shortlisted as the potential investors of NSC.

Aside from NSC, Roxas said the Philippines was keen on getting Malaysia's backing for its plan to avail of a special mechanism allowing Asean members to defer on some of their commitments to cut tariffs by 2003 for the Asean Free Trade Area.

Roxas said Malaysia has successfully obtained the nod of its peers in Asean for a delay in the liberalization of its automotive industry.

Roxas has committed to push for a delay of up to 10 years in the scheduled reduction of duties on polymers or base materials for plastic products from 15 percent to 5 percent by 2003 after local petrochemical players promised to band together and build a $700-million naphtha cracker plant in the country.

SRA cuts sugar imports due to higher output

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE GOVERNMENT is set to cancel the importation of some 48,000 metric tons of sugar, which are scheduled for shipment in the second half of this year.

The Department of Agriculture and the Sugar Regulatory Administration have decided to cut down the volume of sugar imports this year as local production was more than adequate to provide the needed buffer of 50,000 metric tons for the lean months of August and September.

SRA Administrator James Ledesma said in an interview that the total production for crop year ending Aug. 31 would reach 1.8-million metric tons or 40,000 MT above the previous estimate.

Some sectors, however, said the SRA's move might pose some problems since the supposed sugar imports were already contracted to private traders, including All Asian Countertrade Inc., Busco Sugar Milling Co. Inc., Don Pedro Sugar Milling Corp. and Ed&Fman's Southwind Sugar Corp.

Ledesma said that of the 48,000 MT of sugar, about 18,000 MT would be cancelled and the remaining 30,000 MT worth $12 million or P600 million would be diverted to other markets overseas, most likely in the Asean.

"It is not easy to find new buyers, we only have three weeks to work this out possibly with another Asian country," added Ledesma.

The cancellation of the 48,000 MT shipment reduced the country's import target to 127,000 MT this year, from the original target of 175, 000 MT.

The country is expecting a sugar production shortfall of 250,000 to 300,000 metric tons this year.

RP urged to adopt cluster theory of management

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE PHILIPPINES could emerge from its economic gloom and become more globally competitive if it would concentrate on developing a few key sectors based on the cluster theory of management, said Emmet Thomas, president of the Asia Pacific operations of international consulting firm Monitor Co.

In an interview following a speech before businessmen and government officials Thursday morning, Thomas explained that the cluster theory as conceptualized by management guru Michael Porter assumed that economic growth could be spurred by building competitive clusters of industries.

"Industry sectors and firms compete, not countries. But it's the job of the Philippines to make as many globally competitive sectors and companies as possible," Thomas said.

At present, Thomas noted, the Philippines has no world-class clusters but the tourism, agriculture and information technology sectors have the best potential to emerge as such.

The private sector should take the lead and work hand in hand with the government to identify and promote specific areas under the target sectors.

The government could help by establishing a stable and conducive macroeconomic environment for growth and by using its procurement power to provide liquidity to the industries. For example, the government could outsource parts of its operations to firms in the information technology sector.

Focus, he said, should be on only two or three key sectors rather than 10 or 15 and instead of attempting to spread the growth evenly across the country, those areas with competitive advantage should be given priority.

Among members of the Association of Southeast Asian countries, the Philippines was probably ranked in the middle in terms of competitiveness, he noted.

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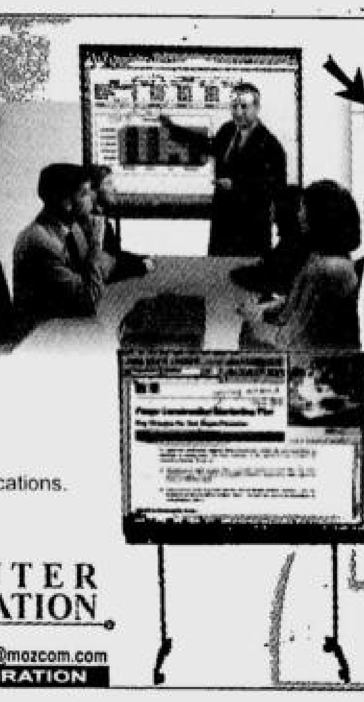
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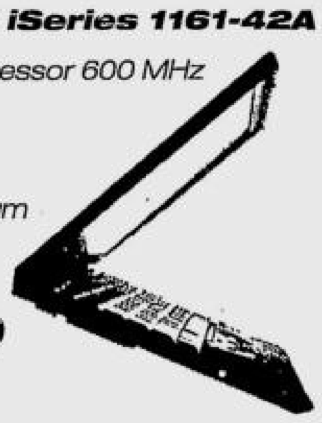
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CONSTRUCTION/ DESIGN

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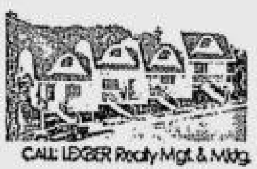

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CLOTILDE (Meding) VILLASANTA CATAUMBER

3 June 1910 - 3 August 2001

Devoted wife of the late **Ramon**; dearest sister of **Cita** (†) & **Jose, Santa, Nany & Florencio, Toning & Pio** (†); beloved **Mama** of **Sonia & John** (†), **Margie, Dante & Tess, Mafin & Ed, Neneng & Joseph, Chito & Mylene, Steve, Boyette & Wilma, Joey**; loving Lola of **Marianne, Diane, Miko, Paolo, Jolo, Jommel, Buddy, Innah, Bowi & Bonry.**

Her remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City, and will be transferred to Lopez, Quezon, early morning of Wednesday, 8 August 2001.

Interment will be on Saturday, 11 August 2001, at the Nuestra Señora del Pilar Memorial Park, Lopez, Quezon, after the Mass at 3:30 p.m.

"Father, into Thy hands, I commend my spirit..."
Luke 23:46

AMADO TAN VELASCO

Husband of Teresa
and father of Vicky Gomez, Aqui & Weng (Venal) and Martha,
now peacefully rests in the infinite warmth and embrace of our Lord,
after having joined Him last Saturday, 4 August 2001 at the age of 83.

His family and friends request for prayers
for the eternal repose of his soul.
His cremated remains lie at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels,
Sucat, Parañaque, where a funeral Mass will be offered
on Wednesday, 8 August 2001 at 10:00 a.m.

For God so loved the world that He gave
His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in
Him and should not perish but have everlasting life.
John 3:16

PATRIA CLEMENTE VDA. DE RESOS

of Looc, Romblon

Peacefully joined her Creator on August 4, 2001 at the age of 86.

Her children **Atty. Arsenior Resos** and **Erlinda, Col. Eduardo Resos** and **Josie, Lt. Col. Victor Resos** (†) and **Juliet, Mely R. Fabellar** and **Gody, Cleofe R. Esquejo** and **Ernie** (†), **Police Chief Supt. Dominador Resos Jr.** and **Fely**, grandchildren, great grandchildren, sisters-in-law, cousins, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends mourn her passing and wish her eternal rest.

Her body lies in state at the family residence at Poblacion Looc, Romblon.

Interment will be on Saturday, August 11, 2001 at the Looc Municipal Cemetery after the Mass at 10:00 AM.

Whoever serves Me must follow Me; and where I am, my servant also will be.

John 12:16

CLASSIFIEDS

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE/FEMALE

•Ofc Staff•9168033 Arlene

•Urgent! 18 Ofc Personnel 18-45yo w/or w/o exp Direct Start ASAP! 9134470 HAZEL

URGENT OFFICE STAFF PLS CALL MS. FAITH #7366660

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ANNOUNCEMENT

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AUCTION SALE

NUESTRA P'SHOP BR. IV Sucat Paranaque Auction Sale on August 9, 2001, all unredeemed pledges during the month of Febbruary & March 2001.
SONS OF J. LANUZA Auctioneer

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

ERSAO Food/drinks T#364-9683

Globe/Smart -13.5% 726-3860

I made P1.5M last 3 mos. I need 55 women to train Ms.Tan 525-0228 or 34

I need Medicines Hospital Supplies & Equipt Any Quantity 4199202 Kristine

RTW 4 Tiange Bazar 3738821

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that the estate of the late **FERNANDO M. COSTELO JR.** was settled extrajudicially by the heirs as per Doc. No. 611, Page No. 42, Book No. II, Series of 2001 before Atty. Arturo M. Marvin, Notary Public, Quezon City.
(PDI-July 23, 30 & Aug. 6, 2001)

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late **CLARITA TALLA** was extrajudicially settled among heirs per Doc. No. 1185; Page No. 11; Book No. 36; Series of 2001 before Notary Public Danilo B. Banares of Makati City
(PDI-Aug. 6, 13 & 20,2001)

Notice is hereby given that the extrajudicial settlement of estate with waiver executed by the heirs of ISABELO P. VIDAL on 7/28/01 before notary public Atty.Luis S. Salas of Pasay City per Doc. No. 289; Page No. 58; Book No. 1; Series of 2001
PDI-Aug. 6, 13 & 20, 2001

Notice is hereby given that the estate of late Cesar M. Espinosa has been extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc. 273 Page 56 Book XXXIX Series 2001 before Notary Public Atty. Isabelo C. Salamida of Tarlac City
[PDI-August 6,13&20,2001]

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given that Alabang Golf and Country Club Stock Certificate A2108 in the name of Eduardo Escueta was lost.
(PDI-July 23,30 &Aug.6,2001)

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH
Oh, St. Joseph, whose protection is so great, so strong, so prompt before the throne of God. I place in you all my interest and desires. Oh, St. Joseph, do assist me by your powerful intercession, and obtain for me from your divine son all spiritual blessings, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. So that, having engaged here below your heavenly power, I may offer my thanksgiving and homage to the most loving of fathers. Oh, St. Joseph, I never weary contemplating you, and Jesus asleep in your arms; I dare not approach while He reposes near your heart. Press Him in my name and kiss His fine head for me and ask Him to return the Kiss when I draw my dying breath. St. Joseph, Patron of departing souls - Pray for me.
This prayer was found in the fiftieth year of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In 1505 it was sent from the Pope to Emperor Charles when he was going into battle. Whoever shall read this prayer or hear it or keep it about themselves, shall never die a sudden death, or be drowned, nor shall poison take effect on them; neither shall they fall into the hands of the enemy, or shall be burned in any fire or shall be overpowered in battle.
Say for nine mornings for anything you may desire. It has never been known to fail so be sure you really want what you ask.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
MAYNILA, PILIPINAS

MEMORANDUM

PREQUALIFICATION, BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
INVITATION FOR PREQUALIFICATION / ELIGIBILITY AND BIDDING

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) invites interested general building contractors currently accredited with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for pre-qualification / eligibility and if later found eligible/ qualified, to bid for the project described below:

Project Title	: Renovation of the Project Development and Management Office (PDMO)
Scope of Work	: Complete fit-out and furnishing of all materials, labor, tools and equipment, technical, supervision and other operations necessary for the construction and completion of the project all in accordance with the approved contract document drawings and specifications of the project.
Project Location	: Room 204, five Storey Building, BSP Main Complex, Manila A. Mabini corner P. Ocampo (former V. Cruz) Streets, Manila
Approved Budget	: Pesos One Million (P1,000,000.00)
Source of Funding	: Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Minimum Requirement (Criteria)	
PCAB License Classification	: IAC Category Small (Building)
Contractor's Construction Experience in Similar Project	: Have completed in the past five (5) years at least three (3) projects of similar Architectural works, each costing at least One Million Pesos preferably high end interior and architectural renovation or new construction works for commercial or institutional buildings requiring high end finishes and excellent workmanship on financial institutions, banks, hotels, commercial establishment & other of similar or greater complexity
Credit Line/Cash Deposit Certificate Req't.	: Pesos One Hundred Thousand (P100,000.00)
Prequalification/Eligibility Statement Forms	
Cost of Forms	: Two Hundred Pesos per set (P200.00/set)
Date and Time of Issuance	: Aug 06 to 20, 2001 / 9:30 am to 12:00 nn & 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm
Place of Issuance and Submission of Accomplished Eligibility/Statement Documents	: PBAC Secretariat Rm 204 (Tel No. 524-7011 loc 3143) 2nd Floor - Five Storey Building BSP Complex A. Mabini corner P. Ocampo (former V. Cruz) Streets, Manila
Deadline of Submission	: August 27, 2001 4:00 PM
Notice of Eligibility/Ineligibility	
Date and Time of Issuance	: September 20, 2001 / 9:30 am to 12:00 nn & 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm
Place of Issuance	: PBAC Secretariat Rm 204
Bid/Tender Documents	: Shall be issued only to eligible/prequalified contractors upon payment of the non-refundable cost of the documents.
Cost of Documents/Place of Issuance	: Five Thousand Pesos per set (P5,000.00/set) PBAC Secretariat Rm 204
Date and Time of Issuance	: September 20 to 21, 2001 / 9:30 am to 12:00 nn & 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm
Pre-bid Conference	
Date and Time	: September 24, 2001 9:30 AM
Venue	: BMD Conference Room/2nd Floor - Five Storey Building BSP Complex
Submission and Opening of Bids	
Deadline/Venue of Submission	: October 08, 2001 / 9:00 am to 10:00 am / PBAC Secretariat Room 204

BID OPENING WILL FOLLOW IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE DEADLINE OF SUBMISSION OF BIDS. LATE BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Schedule for issuance of notice for eligibility/ineligibility up to deadline of submission of bids may be subject to change.

Guidelines stipulated in the provisions of PD 1594 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations, as amended and other applicable rules & regulations shall apply relative to pre-qualification/eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids & award of contract.

BSP reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any defect or formality therein, or accept such bid or award any part thereof to any contractor/s whose bid/s is/are evaluated to be most advantageous to BSP. Furthermore, BSP is not obligated to compensate/indemnify the contractor for any expenses or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bids nor does it guarantee that an award of contract will be made.

(Sgd.) **Marcos J. Siongco Jr.**
PBAC - Chairman

(PDI--Aug 6 & 18, 2001)

Republika ng Pilipinas
KAGAWARAN NG PAGSASAKA
PAMBANSANG PANGASIWAAN SA NUTRISYON
(NATIONAL NUTRITION COUNCIL)
Villamor Interchange, South Superhighway
Makati City, Philippines

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Nutrition Council is inviting all eligible bidders for the following:

1. One (1) unit Multi Media Data Projector with built-in CCD Camera
2. Four (4) units Notebook computer Pentium III at least 650 MHZ (unbranded)
3. Printing of the following:
    - a. 216,825 cps. - Poster on Nutritional Guidelines for Filipinos
    - b. 136,950 cps. - Posters on fruits and vegetables
    - c. 42,000 cps. - Komiks on fruits & vegetables
    - d. 20,000 cps. - Poster calendar on fruits & vegetables
4. About Sixteen (16) sets Lightweight, portable, collapsible exhibit panels

23 August 2001 - Pre-bid conference at 1:30 p.m. at NNC Conference Room
27 August 2001 - Submission of eligibility documents at the office of the Chair of BAC
30 August 2001 - Submission of bid envelops and opening of bid envelopes 9:00 a.m. at NNC Conference Room

All particulars relative to the eligibility, bid bond, bid security, pre-bid conference, bid evaluation and award of contract shall be governed by the provisions of EO No. 302 and its implementing rules and regulations as amended by E.O. No. 262 dated **July 5, 2000** and other applicable rules and regulations.

The NNC-BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive minor informalities, or accept such bids which will be advantageous to the government. The NNC-BAC for any reason may annul the bidding process at any time prior to the awarding of the contract without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidders. Decision of NNC BAC is final and binding.

For further information, please call Ms. Myrna M. Claveria, Officer-In-Charge, Administrative Division at Telephone No. **816-4239 & 843-5824.**

(Sgd.) **CAROLINA B. BATALLONES**
Deputy Executive Director

(PDI - Aug. 5 & 6, 2001)

PCGG

Presidential Commission on Good Government

INVITATION TO BID

The Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) invites offers to purchase by way of sealed bidding the following properties:

Location	Description	Floor Price
BAGUIO CITY		
Outlook Drive (North), Baguio City	(Hans Menzi Compound) 3,875.57 square meters, more or less, of residential land with improvements under Lot 30 of Transfer Certificate of Title No. T-35742.	P 40,000,000.00
Outlook Drive (North), Baguio City	(Jose Y. Campos Compound) 17,516.20 square meters, more or less, of residential land with improvements under Transfer Certificate of Title Nos. T-49479, 49480 and 49481.	P 148,000,000.00
Outlook Drive (North), and Baguio-Itogon Road, Baguio City	(Wigwam Compound) 1,146 square meters, more or less, of residential land with improvements under Lot 2, Tsl-1-2-60580.	P 12,000,000.00
Outlook Drive (North), Baguio City	(Banaue Inn Compound) 2,677 square meters, more or less, of residential land under Transfer Certificate of Title No. T-37014.	P 6,200,000.00
EDSA, MANDALUYONG CITY		
EDSA corner Berkely Street, Mandaluyong City (In front of SM Megamall)	2,013 square meters, more or less, of commercial land under Transfer Certificate of Title No. 390162.	P 90,600,000.00
CALOOCAN CITY		
Maligaya Street, Pangarap Village, Makatipo, Tala, Caloocan City (North)	300 square meters, more or less, of residential land under Certificate of Title No. C-30047.	P 250,000.00
Matahimik Street, Pangarap Village, Makatipo, Tala, Caloocan City (North)	300 square meters, more or less, of residential land under Certificate of Title No. T-131830.	P 250,000.00
Kingswood Street, Emerald Court Subdivision, Camarin, Caloocan City (North)	480 square meters, more or less, of residential land under Transfer Certificate of Title Nos. T-103234 and T-103235.	P 1,000,000.00
CEBU CITY		
Barangay Lahug, Beverly Hills, Cebu City	1,445 square meters, more or less, of residential land, under Transfer Certificate of Title No. 61559.	P 10,500,000.00

Complete descriptions/specifications of the properties, including bidding guidelines, bid forms and instruction to bidders are available for a fee of PESOS: ONE THOUSAND ONLY (P1,000.00) at the PCGG Privatization Secretariat c/o Ms. Estrella F. Tigas or Ms. Alma M. Provido at the 3rd Floor IRC Building, #82 EDSA, Mandaluyong City from **August 7 to 17, 2001** from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Pre-bid conference will be held on **August 24, 2001** at 3:00 p.m. at the PCGG Conference Room, Ground Floor, IRC Building, #82 EDSA, Mandaluyong City.

Sealed bids should be dropped at the Bid Box on August 29, 2001 at 3:00 p.m. at the abovementioned address.

The sale of properties shall be on **"As Is, Where Is"** and **CASH BASIS** only.

The government reserves the right to reject any and all bids, or any part thereof, waives any formality or requirements contained therein and will accept the offer it considers as the most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) **JORGE V. SARMIENTO**
Commissioner
Chairman, PCGG Privatization Committee

(PDI - Aug. 5, 6 & 7, 2001)

PHILIPPINE EDS TECHNO-SERVICE, INC.,

A Japanese Design Engineering firm handling major Automotive Components and Wiring Harness design projects for local affiliates and export to Japan, immediately requires competent individuals:

SENIOR ASSISTANT MANAGER

Qualifications: Graduate of any Bachelor of Science course with at least 10 years experience in the supervision of the following:

- Manufacturing of Automotive components;
- Preparation of technical documents for production;
- At least 5 years experience in handling Japanese clients.

THESE ARE URGENT REQUIREMENTS!

All applicants are requested to MAIL comprehensive resumé with recent photo and contact phone number starting 30-31 July 2001 to the address below.

Philippine EDS Techno-service, Inc.
20th Floor 6788 Ayala Avenue, Oledan Square
Makati City

Nueva Ecija II Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Calipahan, Talavera, Nueva Ecija

INVITATION TO BID NO. NE II-DOE-EF-2001-001

The Department of Energy pursuant to Department Circular No. 95-11-009 under Energy Regulations No. 1-94 implementing Section 5 (i) of Republic Act No. 7638, as amended and its attendant rules and procedures, has allocated from its Electrification Fund (EF) an amount to be made available to Nueva Ecija II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (NEECO II) for the electrification projects in the province of Nueva Ecija as per Notice to Proceed No. EF 2001-486 dated February 13, 2001.

Nueva Ecija II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (NEECO II) invites sealed Bids from eligible bidders for the construction of the following distribution lines:

PROJECT PROPOSAL	KM OF LINE			
	2-Phase	1-Phase	Underbuilt	Open Secondary
1. Brgy. Capintalan, Carranglan		2.210	2.210	0.390
2. Brgy. Puttan, Carranglan	6.910		6.910	0.700
3. Brgy. Piut, Carranglan	6.450		5.550	0.420
4. Brgy. Mayamot I, Talugtug		3.950	0.260	1.050
5. Brgy. Mayamot II, Talugtug		4.020	1.030	0.280
6. Brgy. Sta. Catalina, Talugtug		3.530	0.650	0.420
7. Brgy. Maasin, Talugtug		1.200	0.560	1.260
8. Brgy. Villa Rosario, Talugtug		3.020	1.540	0.560
9. Brgy. Alula, Talugtug	3.360	0.210	1.540	1.190
10. Brgy. Buted, Talugtug		3.390	2.240	0.700
11. Brgy. Saguing, Talugtug				0.280
12. Brgy. Sampaloc, Talugtug		1.710	0.700	0.490
13. Brgy. Macapabellag, Guimba		1.330	0.320	0.350
14. Brgy. Sta. Lucia, Guimba		4.980	3.940	0.700
TOTAL	16.720	29.550	27.470	8.790

Bidders are required to bid for the whole package only.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased, starting August 6, 2001, by eligible bidders upon submission of a written application to the above and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **THREE THOUSAND PESOS (P3,000.00).**

Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and inspect the bidding documents at the office of the PBAC, NEECO II, Calipahan, Talavera, Nueva Ecija, Tel. No. (044) 411-1007. Pre-bid Conference will be held on August 24, 2001 at 9:00 AM at NEECO II Board Room also of the same address.

Sealed proposals in two (2) copies will be received by the PBAC at Village Inn, Mabini Homesite, Cabanatuan City, at exactly 10:00 AM, August 31, 2001 at which time and place said proposal will be opened and read in the presence of Bidders or Bidder's representative who choose to attend.

All bids submitted must be accompanied by a Bid Security equivalent to **TWO AND A HALF PERCENT (2.5%)** of the Bid Price.

NEECO II hereby reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any defects therein, and accept the bid that is most advantageous to the Cooperative.

ENGR. JUN S. CAPULONG
PBAC, Chairman
NEECO II

(PDI – Aug. 1, 2 & 3, 2001)

National Power Corporation
GENERATION COMPANY 1
161 Bonifacio Drive Port Area, Manila 1018

GENCO-1

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID (2PQ0299RCC-004)

The GENCO-1 Regional Contracts Committee (RCC) is inviting contractors to prequalify for the re-bidding of SUPPLY OF SECURITY SERVICES FOR HOPEWELL TANK FARM, NAVOTAS AND MALAYA GAS TURBINE PLANT, PILILIA, RIZAL.

Application for prequalification is open to wholly owned Filipino Security Agency with valid license issued by the PNP-SOSIA and with at least three (3) years experience.

Prequalification Forms shall be available for issuance starting **July 20 up to August 10, 2001** at the Contract Management Office (CMO), Third Floor, NPC GENCO-1 Building, 161 Bonifacio Drive, Port Area, Manila. Applicants shall be issued Prequalification Form upon presentation of original copy of the applicant's PNP-SOSIA License, together with the Letter of Intent and payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00) per copy.

For purposes of Prequalification and Bidding activities, the following schedule will be observed:

Submission of Prequalification Documents - August 15, 2001 (8 am - 5 pm)
Issuance of Bid Documents - September 24, 2001 (8 am - 5 pm)
Pre-Bid Conference - October 2, 2001 (10 am)
Submission/Opening of Bids - October 12, 2001 (10 am)

The NPC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason waive any required formality therein and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is the most advantageous to the Corporation. The NPC assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expenses or loss that may be incurred in the preparations of bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **LORNA T. DY**
Manager, Professional Services Department
and Chairman, RCC

(PDI – July 28, Aug. 2 & 6, 2001)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA) invites authorized distributors/dealers to participate in the bidding for the supply and delivery of the following laboratory and pest control equipment:

Lot 1 - 8 units Laboratory Testing Mill
8 units Laboratory Huller
Lot 2 - 8 units Analytical Balance
8 units Top Loading Balance
Lot 3 - 28 units Power Sprayer

The schedule of bidding activities is as follows:

August 6-8, 2001 - Issuance of List of Pre-qualification Requirements
August 15, 2001 - Deadline of submission of pre-qualification documents
August 20-22, 2001 - Issuance of bid documents
August 24, 2001 (10:00 AM) - Pre-bidding conference
August 31, 2001
(9:15-10:00 AM) - Submission of bid proposals
(10:15 AM) Opening of bid proposals

Pre-qualification forms and requirements can be secured from and submitted to PBAC Secretariat ODAFA, 7th Floor, Matimyas Building, 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City. Bidding documents may likewise be secured from PBAC Secretariat and the same shall be issued to pre-qualified bidders upon payment of P2,000.00 non-refundable fee.

NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY/INFORMALITY OF THE BIDS RECEIVED AND TO ACCEPT ONLY SUCH BIDS WHICH ARE ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY.

(Sgd.) **EDGAR S. ASUNCION**
Deputy Administrator and
Chairman, PBAC

(PDI – Aug. 2, 3 & 6, 2001)

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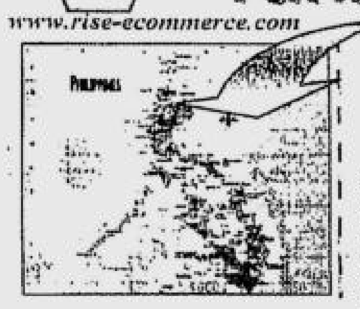

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METRO MANILA BUSINESS CENTERS

◈ *RISE E-Commerce Marikina*
Ms. Erlinda C. Sernadilla
Rm 302 #51 Bayanbayan Ave.,
Marikina Heights, Marikina City
Tel. No (02) 934-7764
CP # 0919-3949151

◈ *RISE CHIT-PANDACAN*
Ms. Necita D. Salivio
1944 A. Sampaguita St., Pandacan,
Manila Tel. No. (02) 561-6605

◈ *RISE Commonwealth Group*
Ms. Ofelia J. Ballesta
628 Grapes St., Commonwealth Ave.,
Q.C. Tel. Nos.: (02) 932-2490/428-0840

◈ *RISE Global City Taguig*
Ms. Regina C. Velasco
355 B-8 GHQ Zone 1-C Signal, Taguig,
Metro Manila Tel. Nos.: (02) 838-7883
CP # 0919-4339797 / 0919-8990289

◈ *RISE MAKATI*
Anthony A. Arciaga
5554 P Binay St., cor. Banuqueno
St., Brgy. Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel. # (02) 887-2446

◈ *RISE E-CUBAO*
Nila D. Cañezal
Rm 403 Diamond Bldg., 603 EDSA
Cubao, Quezon City
Tel. # (02) 418-2729 / CP# 0917-4948023

◈ *RISE PACO*
Allan T. Resterio
116-4 Bagong Baranggay Housing
Project, Zamora St., Pandacan, Manila
Tel. # (02) 562-0645
CP # 0919-8012633 / 0917-4987682

◈ *RISE E-Novaliches*
Ms. Emma C. Daniel
#223-E General Luis cor. Gold Sts.,
Novaliches, Q.C. Tel. # (02) 983-0346
CP # 0919-3082387

◈ *RISE Project 8, Quezon City*
Ms. Rosario E. Ranoa
106-B Rd. 20, Project 8, Quezon City
Tel No.: (02) 456-6955 / 453-8280
CP# 0917-3502595 Fax: (02) 927-2314
Email: *rrreds@pacific.net.ph*

◈ *RISE Roosevelt, Quezon City*
Ms. Meryle Taaca
Tel No.: (02) 330-9259 /
CP # 0917-5401634

◈ *RISE Diliman, Quezon City*
Tel No.: (02) 931-8003
CP # 0917-5209480/8374464

◈ *RISE VIRMAL-BATANGAS CITY*
Virgilio M. Lichauco
Lyceum Site, Kumintang Ibaba,
Batangas CityTel. # (043) 300-2001
Telefax: (043) 300-5815

◈ *RISE Parañaque City*
Marilou Espiritu
357 Jonathan St., Annex 41 B. Luiz,
Parañaque City / CP # 0919-4482698

◈ *RISE CYBIZ-QUEZON CITY*
Le Guzman
#18 Antonio Luna Proj. 4,
Quezon City / Tel. # (02) 932-4216
Telefax: (02) 951-2832
CP #s: 0917-3871028/
0919-832-8771
Email: *go4gold@edsamail.com.ph*

VISAYAS BUSINESS CENTERS

◈ *RISE Iloilo*
(every Saturday 3:00 PM. Business Orientation)
Amigo Terrace Hotel, Iloilo City
Tel No. (033) 337-9252
CP # 0917-6405120 / 0919-6528190

◈ *RISE Tagbilaran City, Bohol*
Ms. Rose E. Ranoa
Tel. No (038) 235-3853
CP # 0917-3502595
Email: *rrreds@pacific.net.ph*

◈ *RISE PUERTO PRINCESA, PALAWAN*
Nixon M. Edora
BM Road, Puerto Princessa City
Tel. # (048) 433-5254

LUZON BUSINESS CENTERS

◈ *RISE Excel-Pangasinan*
Mr. Manuel G. Valdez
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CP# 0919-6649784
Emily Soriano (075) 515-4066
43 Perez Blvd., Dagupan City
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INVITATION TO BID

The AFP Retirement and Separation Benefits Systems (RSBS) invites interested parties to purchase by way of sealed bids the following properties:

Item No.	Description	Location	Minimum/ Floor Price
1-01	2,016 sq.m. industrial lot	Bulacan Agro-Industrial Subd. McArthur Hiway, Calumpit, Bulacan	P6.7M
2-01	1,803 sq.m. industrial lot	- do -	P6.48 M
3-01	1,871 sq.m. industrial lot	- do -	P6.725 M
4-01	1,800 sq.m. industrial lot	- do -	P6.47 M
5-01	1,958 sq.m. industrial lot	- do -	P7.04 M
6-01	27,419 sq.m. commercial/ industrial lot	Sumulong Hiway, dela Paz Antipolo City	P101 M
7-01	5,270 sq.m. industrial lot with 2,493 sq.m. floor area factory building	1st St., Manalac Industrial Estate, Taguig, Metro Manila	P53.8 M
8-01	4,610 sq.m. agricultural land w/ 2 residential bldgs.	Bo. Langkiwa, Biñan, Lag.	P2 M
9-01	2 agricultural lot with total combined land area of 10,071 sq.m.	Bagong Pook, San Jose Batangas	P500 T
10-01	8,008 sq.m. agricultural land	Anao, Tarlac	P320 T
11-01	13 hectares residential raw land	Mapalad, Sta. Rosa Nueva Ecija	P42 M
12-01	367 sq.m. residential lot	Nuestra Sra dela Paz Subd. Bgy dela Paz, Antipolo City	P850 T

Interested bidders may obtain bidding documents starting **August 8, 2001** upon payment of non-refundable fee of P500 pesos from the Office of the Head, Property Management Branch, REMD, 3/F, RSBS Building, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

A Pre-Bidding Conference is scheduled on **August 15, 2001** at 10:00 AM, Central Meeting Room A, RSBS, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

Bids will be opened in the presence of bidders or their representatives on **August 20, 2001** at 10:00 AM at the Central Meeting Room A, RSBS, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

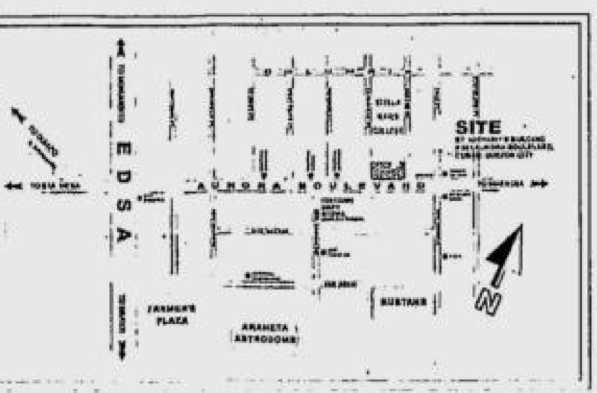
For further inquiries, you can call MS. LIZA HIZON at telephone numbers 9124718 or 9114071 local 249.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT BRANCH

(PDI – Aug. 5, 6 & 7, 2001)

INQUIRER CLASSIFIEDS

Aurora branch is now open to serve your Classified Ads requirements. For inquiries, please call **421-1420** or **421-0343.**



Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Maynila, Pilipinas

DISBURSEMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) will conduct a prequalification of prospective bidders for the replacement of defective ceiling speaker system for BGM/PA at the Multi-Storey Building composed of the following:

1. 410 pcs. - 4" to 8" Ceiling Loud Speakers
2. 410 pcs. - 70.7 volt line transformer
3. 410 pcs. - 6" to 12" diameter Grille with back box
4. 43 pcs. - Level Attenuators (Volume Control)
5. 1 lot - conduits, boxes, wires and other hardwares

Details may be obtained from the Manager II, Procurement Division II, Administrative Services Department, Room 212, 2nd Floor 5-Storey Building, BSP Complex, Malate, Manila, Tel. No. 525-2493 & 525-0048.

For prequalification purposes, interested bidders must submit proofs showing that they comply with the following requirements:

1. Must have been in the business in the supply, installation and commissioning of BGM/PA electronics in the Philippines for at least five (5) years.
2. Must submit list of satisfied clients and on-going projects in the Philippines on BGM/PA installations for the past two,(2) years similar in scope to the subject project.
3. Must submit product brochures for the ceiling mounted loud speaker similar or equal to Atlas-Soundoller, Bogan and TOA.

The above requirements, together with the photocopies of documents listed below (original of items 1 and 2 to be presented for authentication purposes) shall be submitted to the Disbursement Control Committee thru the Administrative Services Department, Room 212, 2nd Floor, 5-Storey Bldg., corner A. Mabini and P. Ocampo, Sr. Streets, Malate, Manila not later than **August 20, 2001.**

1. Articles of Incorporation and Business Registration Papers;
2. Y2000 audited Financial Statements (Balance Sheet & Income Statement);
3. Y2000 Income Tax Returns; and
4. Company history/profile of the bidder.

Only those who comply with the above requirements and are prequalified by the Bank will be invited to participate in the actual bidding which will be conducted on a later date to be advised to prequalified bidders.

The two envelope system shall be adopted in the bidding.

The BSP hereby reserves the right to reject any or all bids, as well as to waive any defects or informality in such bids, and to accept such bids as may be considered most advantageous to the Bank.

FOR THE DISBURSEMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE:

(Sgd.) **EDUARDO L. MAGAHIS**
Officer-In-Charge
Administrative Services Department

(PDI - Aug. 6, 2001)

INVITATION TO BID
"AS IS WHERE IS"

Motor Vehicles

1996 Mercedes Benz C220/UGJ-531
1995 Mitsubishi Lancer 1.5/UFC-633
1994 Honda Civic 1.5/TRH-509
1998 Hyundai Starex Van/WDE-234

For particulars, call Philam Ins. Co., Inc./ Dick Carino. Tel. No. 75-43-457

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ARIES B. ESPINOSA, Assistant Editor

aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

TOYM search gets underway

THE OUTSTANDING Young Men (TOYM) award is now on its 43rd year with Equitable PCI-Bank as major sponsor and supported by the Gerry Roxas Foundation Inc. and the TOYM Foundation Inc.

The Philippine Jaycees' goal and mission is to contribute to the advancement of the global community by providing young persons with the opportunity to develop leadership skills, and find basis in the Jaycee Creed. This precept proceeds from the principle that earth's great treasure lies in the human personality, which must be developed in its wholeness. It is in this context and spirit that the TOYM awards was conceived.

While other awards give recognition purely to humanitarian work, the TOYM award is uniquely given for outstanding leadership and excellence, and contribution to the humanitarian cause. The main objectives are to recognize the outstanding achievements of the nation's youth, to focus public attention on these contributions, to inspire the youth, and to live the Jaycee Creed.

The following criteria were given: The nominee is adjudged by his outstanding leadership and excellence in his field of endeavor; the nominee must have complied with all the rules governing nomination; then the nominee must have engaged in contributing to the cause of humanity. Nominees must also be Filipino citizens between 18 and 40 years old, and must not be a former TOYM awardee.

However, the nominees must comply with the rules governing submission of requirements. Nominations for TOYM shall be open to individuals in all fields of endeavor. It should be made on the prescribed TOYM nomination form and notarized accordingly, submitted in English, Tagalog or Taglish. For more information on the search, call the Jaycees secretariat at 373-7907 to 09.

Over the years, TOYM has become an institution, having developed a reputation for selecting outstanding young men worthy of honor and emulation. TOYM seeks to give national recognition to young men and women whose selfless dedication to their profession has resulted in significant contributions to the welfare of their countrymen and to the country at large. Any individual, public or private entity or organization may nominate candidates in any of the following fields: agricultural and aquaculture, arts, banking, business, community development, economics, education, government service, journalism, law, literature, medicine, science and technology, sports, and other relevant fields such as history, labor administration, and cultural anthropology.

Judges may opt to call the finalists for an interview.

Be part of the Philippines' 'Who's who' in outstanding achievements. Take this opportunity to become beacons of the nation.

BPI HISTORICAL MARKER UNVEILED

Ayala Avenue's first historical marker was recently unveiled during celebrations marking the 150th anniversary of the Bank of the Philippine Islands. The BPI Marker is the embodiment of the bank's strengths, stability, and its tradition of leadership. It is a marker to remember BPI's long and proud history by, as well as the strides it has taken in support of the country's economic development. Shown are the signatories of the BPI historical marker's certificate of transfer from the National Historical Institute: (from left) BPI director Fernando Zobel de Ayala, Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, NHI chair and executive director Pablo Trillana III, BPI president Xavier Loinaz and BPI senior executive vice president Aurelio Montinola III.

GLOBE BAZAAR AT GREENBELT TELECOM CENTER

Globe Telecom has recently opened the Greenbelt Telecom Center to the public. Located at the 2nd floor Cinema Level of the Greenbelt Mall, the Greenbelt Telecom Center is the country's first-ever Globe-exclusive telecom bazaar and is the newest fixture of the classy mall. Offering cellphones, SIM packs, line applications, call cards and accessories, over 20 booths run by Globe-accredited cellular phone dealers have set up shop at the Greenbelt Telecom Center. A booth is shown being visited by customers. Offered at the Greenbelt Telecom Center are perks such as huge savings on prepaid phone kits; lower prices on regular SIM and GlobeXplore SIM packs; discounted handset prices for post-paid plan subscriptions; substantial price-offs on line-only post-paid applications; and free gift items.

Family entertainment at Worlds of Fun Network

WHERE else can you find affordable entertainment, friendly service, a wholesome destination for the entire family and the accessibility of 27 stores in leading shopping malls in Metro Manila and various provinces all over the country? Where else but in the Worlds of Fun. Go places, experience exciting rides, have the time of your life, meet interesting people, spend quality time with your family and friends. You do all this and more if you visit Worlds of Fun, the country's foremost provider of total family entertainment.

A lot of its machines can be played for as low as P4 to P6 per token, depending on the store's location. That's a real deal right there. Worlds of Fun has a wide range of customer-friendly machines that are easy to operate and suited for every member of the family. With 27 branches spread out all over the country, there's a Worlds of Fun strategically located near you.

If it's affordability and accessibility you want, consider for instance that there's a Worlds of Fun entertainment center in all SM malls in urban centers all over the country, complete with the most sensational attractions, video games, kiddie rides and redemption booths. You may also take a pick from its sensational selection of latest games such as Silent Scope 2, Wacky Ducks and Sharpshooter, to name but a few.

If you're a resident of the provinces, there's a Worlds of Fun in San Fernando in Pampanga, Meycauayan, Tarlac, Dagupan, Urdaneta in Pangasinan, NE Pacific Mall in Cabanatuan City and the Taal Vista Hotel in Tagaytay City.

When you're in Visayas-Mindanao, there's a Worlds of Fun in SM Cebu, at the KCC Warehouse Plaza in General Santos City, in KCC Marbel in South Cotabato and Limketkai Mall in Cagayan de Oro City. If family entertainment for you is affordable entertainment, friendly service, a wholesome destination and accessibility, it can all be yours, only at Worlds of Fun.

HENKEL SPONSORS CONCERT

Henkel Philippines Inc. was a sponsor of the 'Apo Hiking Society The Concert' held recently at Onstage Greenbelt. Signing the agreement are Star Concerts executive producer Jonathan Wee and Henkel Philippines associate product manager Jillen Oasan. Also shown at the contract signing were Ricardo Mercado, national sales manager and Cris Aquino, managing director of Henkel Philippines.

NEXTEL TO USE CIS' PRINTING AND ENVELOPING SERVICES

Nextel Communications Philippines Inc. recently signed an agreement with Corporate Information Solutions Inc. (CIS) allowing the latter to print and envelop its monthly statements of account. Nextel, the country's biggest trunk radio operator, is confident of CIS' ability to provide quick and versatile printing and enveloping services as CIS has been doing for other major collection-intensive companies like Meralco, SKYCable, Maynilad Water Services, Infopage and Express Telecom. Using an IBM duplex printer, a Pitney Bowes Series 9 enveloping machine and Elixir software for document design and composition, the CIS Electronic Document Processing Center can stuff additional materials like advertising flyers and stick postage stamps to the mail, ready for posting or pick up by courier. At the agreement signing are (from left) Ruben del Rosario, Nextel manager for local and roaming settlement; Emilio Festejo, Nextel president and CEO; Samit Roy, CIS president and CEO and Lourdes Angeles, CIS vice president for e-Sourcing.

BPI INSURANCE COMPANIES CONTRACT SIGNING

Ayala Financial and Insurance Services Inc. and its principals – the BPI Insurance Companies (Ayala Life, FGU Insurance, Ayala Plans, Ayala Health, Universal Reinsurance) and Ayala Land Inc. recently signed a contract with One Financial Group Inc. to create a financial services marketing company. One Financial Group is the first company that pursued its interest to have a general agency agreement to market a comprehensive line of financial services products. Shown are (seated, from left) Emmanuel G. Herbosa, Ayala Financial chief operating officer, Tomas Gomez IV and Stevenson C. Pena-Sy, managing directors of One Financial Group, Alfonso L. Salcedo Jr., president of BPI Insurance Companies, (standing from left), Joaquin N. Montenegro, Ayala Health Care president and Augustus V. Ferreria, Ayala Life sales director.

BITS Clips

PLAI confab

THE PHILIPPINE Librarians Association Inc. (PLAI) 2001 board of trustees invites interested parties to the PLAI National Conference. The theme is "PLAI 2001 and Beyond: Strengthening Partnership and Linkages." It will be held today, Aug. 6 to 8 at Cebu Grand Hotel, Cebu City. For more information, call Rebecca Jocson at 527-9071 local 44, Marlo Chavez at 735-6011 and Monalisa Leguiab at 716-0106.

CFS Contec seminars

CFS Contec lines up two seminars in August. "Customer Service" (Aug. 10) is for the frontliners, those who deal daily with customers. Find out the magic words to best serve the customers and keep them coming back. "Telemarketing" (Aug. 23) centers on the telemarketers as they make an impression on the phone and clinch the deal. For more details, call 823-4825 or 823-2358.

Info management program

A PROGRAM on how to organize a systematic filing system is being conducted by the ATV Speakers Network today, Aug. 6 at the Conference Room of the Splendido Garden Apartelle, 99 Urban Avenue, Makati City from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Topics for discussion include an overview of records and information management, the need for a records and filing management program, phases and elements of records management, records creation, maintenance, use and disposition. For more details, call Flor, Josie or Carol at 896-8790 and 899-5307.

Philippine scholar

ESTANISLAO

ANDRE Cabuay Estanislao, 19, youngest son of Augusto and Patti Estanislao and a product of Manresa School in BF Homes, Paranaque City, has just graduated with top honors from a two-year International Baccalaureate scholarship grant at Pearson's College, Victoria, BC, Canada. Andre is a beneficiary of a scholarship grant by the United World Colleges through the Ayala Foundation chaired by Vicky Garchitorena. He is also a beneficiary of a leadership award from then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for being an outstanding student and valedictorian at Manressa School. Andre has again been accepted as a full scholar in Middlebury College in Vermont, United States.

DIETHER OCAMPO, PIZZA HUT RENEW CONTRACT

Teen heartthrob Diether Ocampo recently renewed his contract with Pizza Hut during the media launch of its latest product, the Mexican Cheesy Crust Pizza. Present during the contract signing were (from left) Monch Navales, Diether's manager, Diether, Elaine Guzman, vice president for marketing and Henry T. Chua, ad and promo manager. Diether is on his second year as product endorser for Pizza Hut and in a span of just one year, had made five TV commercials, the latest of which is for the Mexican Cheesy Crust Pizza.

CANESTEN PRINT AD OF THE YEAR

Bayer Philippines, makers of Canesten, the most prescribed antifungal brand, recently received the Print Ad of the Year 2000 award from the Creative Guild for its 'Alipunga' ad. Bayer was also given a Certificate for Breakthrough in Category for the Canesten 'Foot' TV ad. The team who produced the winning TV and print ads included BBDO/Guerrero Ortega's creative director David Guerrero; art director David Ferrer; copywriter Dino Ferrer and Grace Abanador, former assistant product manager of Canesten. Dr. Reinhard Shellner, general manager of Bayer Philippines (center) receives the award from Golda Aguilar, account director of BBDO. With them is Gerry Siquijor, OTC group product manager of Bayer Philippines.

INFOTECH

LEO MAGNO, Editor

Microsoft on Code Red: Don't blame us

BY JOEY G. ALARILLA

PUBLICITY over the Code Red worm has not only generated doomsday scenarios almost comparable to the Year 2000 or Y2K bug scare, but also calls for making Microsoft Corp. liable for the security holes in its software.

The head of Microsoft Philippines, however, emphatically said that the software giant should not be blamed for the Code Red attacks. He stressed that it is wrong to say that Microsoft software is inherently vulnerable to security threats, saying that the same could be said of other computing systems.

"Hackers will always try to create worms and viruses. No system in the world, be it Unix, mainframe or Windows, can claim to be absolutely risk-free and virus-protected. This is a known fact," Microsoft Philippines managing director Richard Francis told the INQUIRER through e-mail.

"We in the software industry need to work harder on constantly updating our software and fixing the problems when they arise. Viruses have a major impact on the industry. But it will be pretty improper to say that only Microsoft software is vulnerable to these attacks. Virus attacks and hacking have been around since the creation of computers," he added.

HYPERLINK

Code Red: Those running IIS server software 4.0 or 5.0 on NT 4.0 or Windows 2000 should download a security patch from http://www.microsoft.com/technet/treeview/default.asp?url=/technet/security/bulletin/MS01-033.asp.

Code Red targets a security hole in Microsoft's Windows NT 4.0 and Windows 2000 software, in tandem with the Internet Information Services (IIS) Web server. It is estimated that more than six million servers use IIS.

Microsoft originally posted a patch and security bulletin on June 18. The first wave of the Code Red worm infected an estimated 350,000 systems from July 12 and July 19, reportedly slowing down Internet performance by 40 percent. The second wave that is still propagating involves a mutated variant, though still directing a distributed denial of service attack at the same target: the White House website. Unlike in the first wave, the current variant no longer defaces infected sites with the message: "Hacked by Chinese."

The doomsday scenarios surrounding Code Red revolve around a supposed Internet meltdown, as the resources of infected systems become tied up by the spurious requests for the target IP address. Experts, however, have warned against exaggerating the threat of Code Red, just as in the case of the Y2K problem.

The estimated amount that Microsoft customers around the world may have to fork out to clean up their systems of the Code Red worm so far is as much as $1.2 billion, according to a TechTV.com report. Microsoft, however, through spokesperson Jim Desler, stressed that it is also the responsibility of users to maintain their systems and keep them updated. Desler had de-

MICROSOFT/ p.B15

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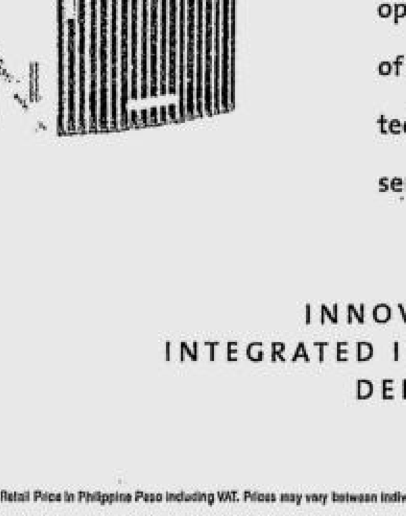

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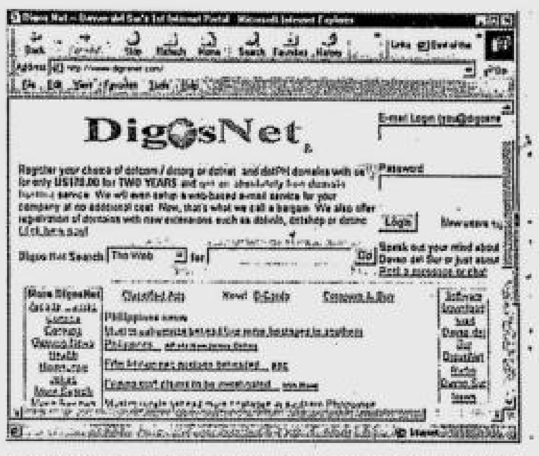


DIGOSNET of the Philippines offers integrated domain name services

Yes, you can get your domain name from Digos

BY ALLAN NAWAL
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DIGOS CITY—With the proliferation of domain name registrars these days, it has become harder for a would-be dotcom to chooose which one to approach.

Normally, an individual or a company would go for the cheapest fee and end up realizing they are bound to spend more just to get their domain working.

For example, one would easily fall for a promo price of $9.95 for a single domain for one year.

"It sounds affordable, so if I were not aware of the additional cost, I would not go elsewhere and register with that domain registrar," said Mayette Gervacio, marketing manager for Digos Networks (www.digosnet.com).

Companies or individuals wishing to get a domain name have to spend additional fees for the DNS (Domain Name Server), normally ranging from $12.95 per month or even a total added cost of $165.35 for the whole year if you include hosting and e-mail services.

"So a domain bought at a low price would actually cost you more than you expected," Gervacio said.

Because of additional fees, which to some extent could be prohibitive for some individuals or companies, Gervacio said getting a personal domain or one for corporate use has been tagged as a low priority project.

"This is where Digos Network wants to work. We want to encourage every potential company to become a dotcom by offering them affordable domain names and other services," she said.

Under Digos Networks all-year round promo, prospective registrants are only billed $70 for a domain registration, hosting and other bundled services including free e-mail set up.

Registrants can choose from a variety of domain name extensions including the traditional ".com," ".net" or ".org") or country code top level domains (ccTLD) including ".ph."

"We have also started to offer newer extensions effective July 15, such as ".into" and ".inc" under the gTLD system," Gervacio said.

Although Digos Network is not accredited by ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers), it has partnered with big names in the domain registration industry to bring the affordable service to the Philippines.

The partners include dotPH, the sole administrator of the ".ph" domain and New.net Corp. for its newer extensions.

"Our founding chair knows how hard it is for a company to establish a Web presence based on his own experience. Because of this, he decided to make dotcom services affordable, so that every potential company can have their own presence in the worldwide Web," Gervacio said.

Intel CEO . . .

(From page B15)

after similar facilities established by the Museum of Science in Boston and the MIT Media Lab back in 1993.

Meanwhile, Intel has recently agreed to support the Mobile IT classroom initiative of the DOST. The mobile IT classroom is a 32-seater air-conditioned bus equipped with computers and other multi-media equipment. It visits remote areas in the Philippines, giving teachers and students a taste of high-tech.

Intel will provide a P9 million grant to cover the software and hardware requirements for two mobile IT classrooms for this year.

Last year, three of these mobile IT classrooms were created by the DOST, and were deployed in different regions in the Philippines. To date, some 42,599 students from 592 schools, and 2,115 teachers of 155 local government units were served during the first quarter of this year.

Replacing the logo in System Properties

By Jerry Liao

YOU can actually change the logo displayed in your System Properties window under your Control Panel. Heres how:

(1) Create a logo and save it as bitmap file (210x105 pixels maximum).

(2) Save the file as OEMLOGO.BMP under the "Windows/System" folder.

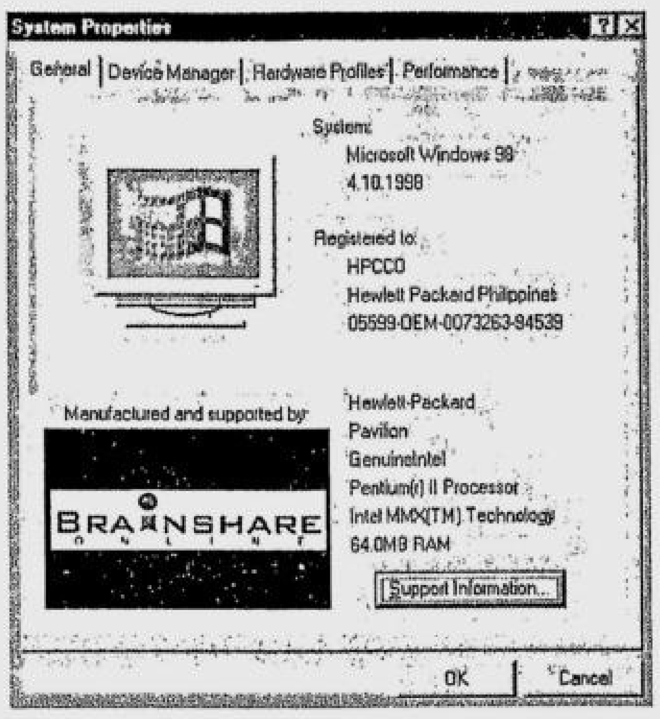
(3) Go to "Control Panel."

(4) Double click "System."

(5) You will see "Manufactured and supported by" with your logo.

(6) You may also want to change the information under OEMLOGO.INI to match your logo.

POWERTIPS



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Microsoft Windows 98
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05599-OEM-0073263-94539

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Intel CEO submits to Palace ₱23M worth of projects

By Erwin Oliva

INTEL president and CEO Craig Barrett has presented P23 million worth of education projects to Malacañang, company officials disclosed.

These projects involve the P14.51 million Intel Computer Clubhouse with the Ayala Foundation and the P9 million Intel mobile IT classroom project with the Department of Science and Technology (DOST).

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was witness to the signing of the agreements for both of the projects in Malacañang.

The Intel Computer Clubhouse is a $32 million project by Intel Corp. that is set to establish 100 clubhouses in "underprivileged" communities all over the world by 2005, according to Yvonne Garcia-Flores, education manager of Intel Philippines.

"It's a safe, and free after-school environment for kids where they can experiment with animation, Web design, programming, digital music composition and digital art," Garcia-Flores told the INQUIRER. "It's a concrete initiative to bridge the digital divide."

Intel and the Ayala Foundation have agreed to work together for the setup of the first of at least three clubhouses in the Philippines. The first Intel Computer Clubhouse will be located at the Mater Dolorosa Parish in Makati City.

"This is the first clubhouse in the Philippines and Southeast Asia," Garcia-Flores added.

Intel will be investing $270,000 for the first year of the computer clubhouse for purchase of hardware, software, as well as for operations. On the second until the fourth year, Intel would gradually decrease its investments in the facility as it expects the Ayala Foundation to take over.

The Intel Computer Clubhouse was modeled

INTEL/ p.B14

ICT Show 2001 set for Greenhills

A NUMBER of information and communications technology (ICT) companies have expressed their support to the holding of an ICT exposition this September at the Greenhills Shopping Center.

The ICT event will showcase a wide array of ICT products and services from 500 companies and exhibitors. The expo, called ICT Show 2001, will be joined by early registrant-exhibitors which include wireless technology proponents, investors, ICT suppliers and buyers such as Computer Times, Sequtech Corp., Accy Telecom, Absolutely Practical, Solidways Marketing, P&G Enterprises and MM & Company.

ICT Show 2001 is designed to provide opportunities for technical and business cooperation, commercial transaction, technology transfer in an open market. The event comes at the heels of the Macapagal administration's declaration that ICT will propel the country into the international IT scene and could help uplift the Philippine economy.

For details, interested parties may get in touch with Convex International at 726-8664 to 65 or 726-4128 to 30 or e-mail convex@mozcom.com.

Project to modernize Davao police force revived by mayor

By Erwin Oliva

NEWLY elected Davao City mayor Rodrigo Duterte has revived a project to modernize the police in the city, an official of an IT company set to implement and manage the project said.

Jun Mercader, president and CEO of Davao-based IT firm iThink Technologies, disclosed that the project, roughly costing P8.5 million, would automate the police blotter system, the filing and tracking of traffic violations, generation of statistical reports on crime and traffic violations, and the filing of police clearance at the Philippine National Police regional headquarters in Davao City, and later in nearby municipalities.

According to Mercader, the first phase of the project began three years ago but was shelved as the project lost ground to "politics."

This year, however, a foundation led by the Davao Light and Power Co. (of the Aboitiz Group) and several business groups that initially raised P3.5 million to fund the effort, is now pushing for the implementation of the ambitious project, he said.

"The project will go full swing this year," Mercader, who has been hired as project consultant, said.

Mercader is now working with IBM Lotus Software on implementing an e-mail and collaborative system for the four modules of the modernization project.

The computerized blotter will implement an electronic version of the paper-based blotter using Lotus Notes and Domino as front-end. This system helps police verify and screen complainants, as well as establish historical profile of suspects based on an electronic database.

Similarly, the electronic filing and tracking of traffic violations will also use IBM Lotus Software's collaborative software, Mercader said. This will also be tied to a database.

As added highlight to the modernization project, Mercader said that iThink Technologies will create a system where the mayor can readily grab crime and traffic report statistics from information culled over a certain time.

Finally, the project also will automate filing of police clearance in Davao City. The main headquarters in Davao City will be the first to implement this module but eventually it would include 15 precincts in the province, the executive said.

"We hope to replicate this in hard-to-reach areas in the province," he added.

Davao City has roughly 3,000 police personnel, serving four other cities.

Microsoft on Code Red . . .

(From page B14)

clined to comment directly on Code Red in TV reports.

Asked if he agrees with this estimated damage figure, Francis replied: "I can't comment on the figure but we have done our best to provide the patch and proactively inform our customers about it. We are very confident that this has helped to stop the spread. We have not heard of anything major around Code Red—so far."

Francis debunked claims that Microsoft is more concerned with selling software instead of making sure security holes are fixed in products before they are shipped. He also disagreed with the perception that Microsoft has no credibility when it comes to security issues.

"Months before a Microsoft product is even shipped to customers, the product is first used and tested by Microsoft employees. We eat our own dog food. This is our way of discovering chinks in our products. So when a product is finally released to the public, you can be sure that it went through arduous testing.

"But then, we are in a world of constant change. Every time a virus company detects a new virus strain—hackers come up with another type. This is the same with biological viruses too, so we have to constantly update and fix things whenever a new problem comes out," Francis said.

So far, the second coming of Code Red has seen the infections abating—something that might be attributed to Microsoft's release of the patch. Experts have also said that companies are now better prepared to deal with virus threats, particularly after the "love bug" incident last year.

In the Philippines, few incidents have been reported. Local Internet service providers have pointed out that many of them rely on Unix or Linux servers, and so were not affected.

Francis said that Microsoft is devoting resources to helping customers address the issue.

"Our Premier Support Services group helps our corporate customers in preparing for instances like these by proactively checking their systems and providing necessary patches. All Microsoft customers can easily call our Microsoft Support Services hotline to get information and technical support," Francis said. "I would like to note though that in the past days, we have only gotten six calls on Code Red—and most of these were just inquiries," he added.

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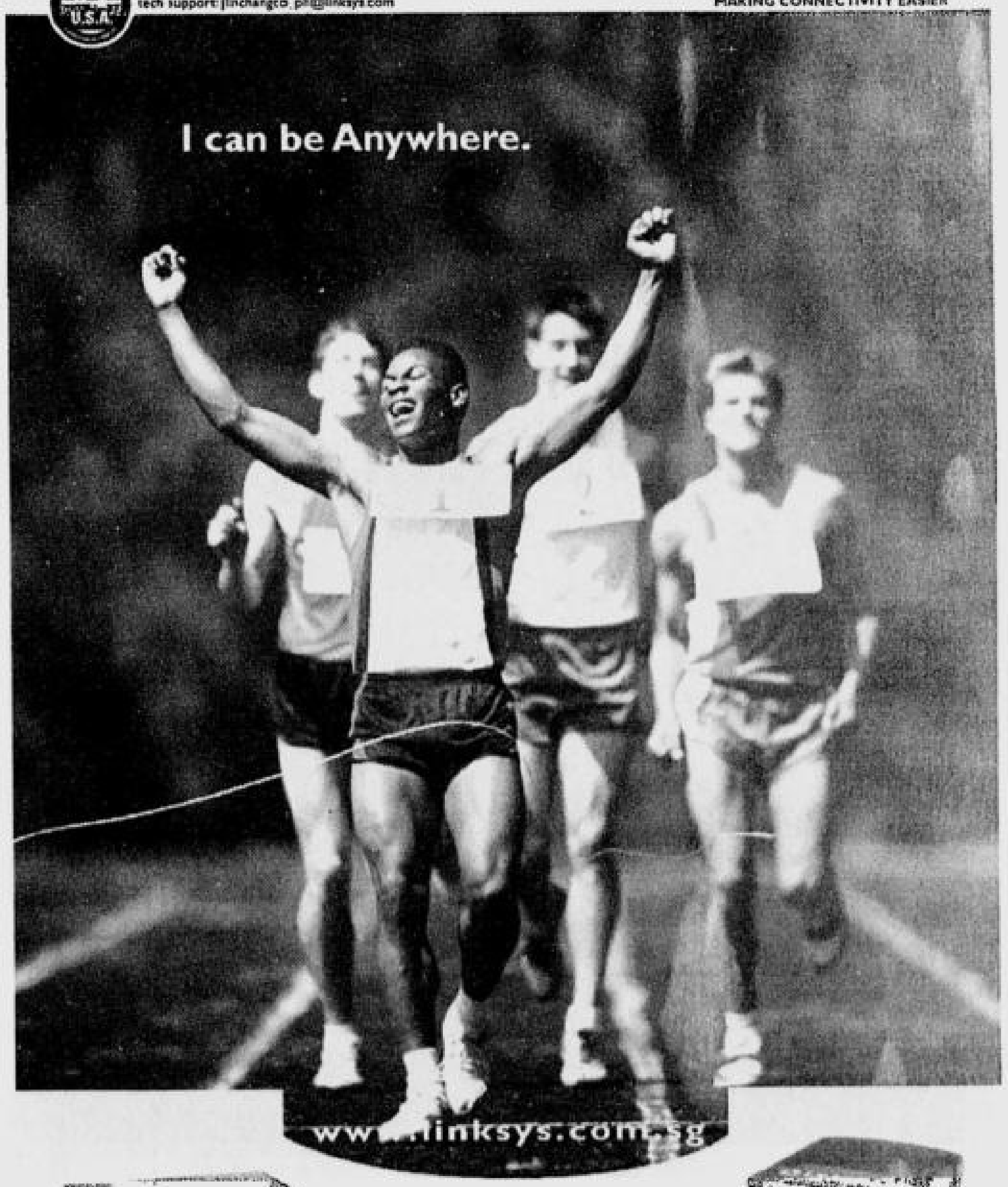

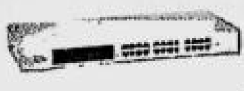
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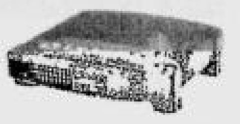
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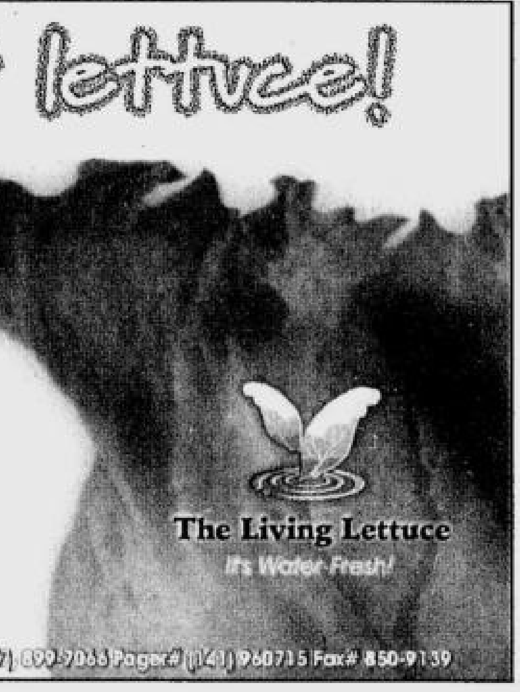

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Cement probe set

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

THE SENATE is poised to look into allegations that members of the Philippine Cement Manufacturers Corp. are operating as a cartel responsible for the steep rise in cement prices.

On Friday, Sen. Juan Flavier filed a resolution urging the Senate committee on trade and industry to look into the "reported emerging cartel" in the cement industry that, he said, was an infringement of the Constitution and detrimental to consumers.

This will be the second time since 1999 that Congress will look into allegations that the cement industry is operating as a cartel. The House committee on trade and industry earlier looked into charges of a cartel in the industry, but no definite results came out of the report.

Flavier, in his resolution, noted that since a new group of players took control of 92 percent of the local cement industry after the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis, cement prices had risen 115 percent from P45 per 40-kilogram bag in 1998 to P97 in 1999.

The surge in cement prices happened despite too much capacity in the industry, he said.

Flavier said while local manufacturers were selling cement at P145 per bag, they were exporting at only P30 to P40 per bag.

Although he did not name the new group, Flavier was alluding to the world's "Big 4" cement players—Holderbank Financiere Glaris Ltd., Cemex SA, Lafarge SA and Blue Circle Industries Plc—that gobbled up all of the country's major cement players except former Marcos crony Eduardo Cojuangco Jr.'s Northern Consolidate Cement.

The Senate inquiry comes as Philcemcor is seeking from the Department of Trade and Industry punitive duties and quantitative restrictions on cement imports from Taiwan Cement Corp.

The group has accused Taiwan Cement of poaching by dumping its excess supply here at cutthroat prices.

The trade department has vowed to wrap up its investigation of Philcemcor's petition within the month.

A National Economic and Development Authority study on the cement industry found inconclusive evidence of a cartel, even though it admitted that current conditions were conducive for increased collusion among industry players.

"A cartel would imply that the players in the industry are acting in unison to influence prices through production cutbacks in order to maximize their profits. Usually, cartels tend to push up prices of commodities the group is producing. A cartel must agree not only on the total level of production, but also on the level of production of each member," Neda said.

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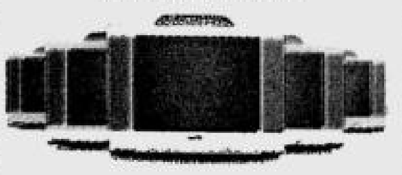

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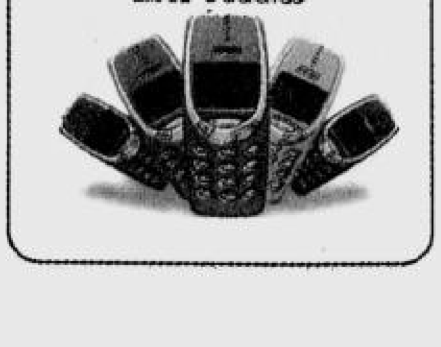

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What Drives You CALTEX

BSP reviews BOP, reserves growth targets

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

DECLINING export receipts have prompted the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to review its external accounts targets, including a projected $1-billion balance-of-payments deficit and, possibly, an estimated dollar reserves of $14 billion.

"We have to review the BOP and other numbers to see whether the targets are still valid given recent export numbers," BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said.

From a $70-million surplus, the BOP target was revised in March. This came after the government cut its export growth target by half to 4 percent and eventually, to zero. The gross international reserves target was also slashed by $1 billion to $14 billion.

Last week, the government reported a 25-percent decline in exports to a 20-year low in June compared to its level a year ago.

Buenaventura said monetary authorities would meet with semiconductor and garment exporters this week to look for a clearer picture of the export sector this year.

He said a further erosion in export earnings this year, while still unlikely, could force the central bank to pursue a financing program to finance the BOP.

"Borrowing could become a possibility if things don't improve. But at this time, we have no plans to borrow for the BOP," he said.

Buenaventura said the central bank was also worried with the lack of foreign direct and portfolio investments.

SEC asks DOJ to reconsider Wincorp ruling

BY ELENA R. TORRIJOS

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission will ask the Department of Justice this week to reconsider its decision dismissing investors' complaint against Westmont Investment Corp.

The commission is alarmed that the justice department's decision may prejudice another case it filed against businessman Dante Tan, whom it accused of manipulating the stock prices of BW Resources Corp.

In a decision issued on July 3, a three-member panel from the justice department said Wincorp officers and directors and branch personnel of Westmont Bank were only civilly and not criminally liable for fraud allegedly committed through the sale of unregistered securities.

SEC Associate Commissioner Joselia Pobladar told reporters that the justice department based its decision on the appreciation of the facts and on the assumption that the Securities Regulation Code enacted in August last year repealed the Revised Securities Act.

Earlier, however, another panel reviewing the case filed by the SEC against Tan, his associates and a slew of brokers concluded that the Securities Regulation Code did not repeal the old law and therefore, recognized the existence of the past criminal offense under the new law.

"Assuming that the motion for reconsideration is rejected on the basis of that issue alone, then we would look to the DOJ to say, which is which," Pobladar said.

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Chinese traders won't flee, won't invest either

By Abigail L. Ho

NEITHER the peso devaluation nor the kidnapping incidents can drive Filipino-Chinese businessmen away.

"We're not leaving the Philippines. If it sinks, we sink together," affirms Chinese Filipino Business Club Inc. president Dante Go.

Since the peso started to fall against the US dollar, there have been speculations that investors, not only the Filipino-Chinese businessmen, may pull out their investments from the country.

The Filipino-Chinese businessmen are particularly sensitive to the kidnapping issue, as they are the prime targets of the kidnappers since the wealthiest in the country are among their members.

But the members of the Filipino-Chinese business community have expressed confidence in the Arroyo administration. They believe their investments are safe here and there is no need to pack up and go.

Go says the economic downturn is not exclusive to the Philippines.

"It's happening everywhere. Even the Japanese yen is getting weaker and weaker, and we're also affected by the crisis in Argentina. With these two factors, the peso will

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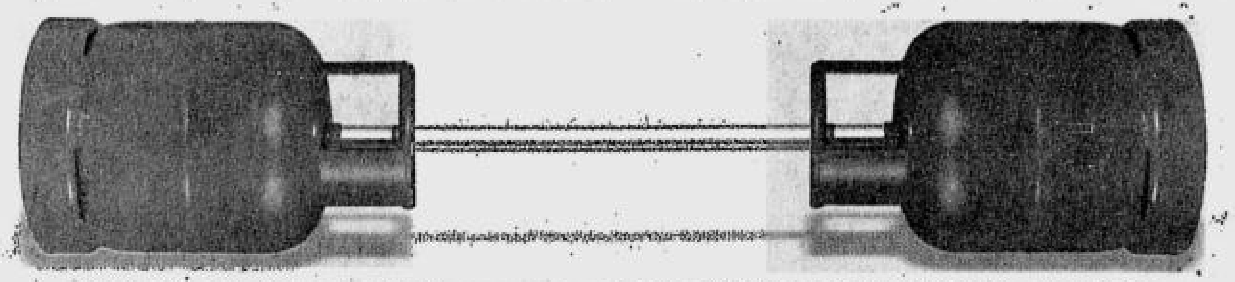

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Goodbye, dotcom; welcome, Internet-enabled enterprise!

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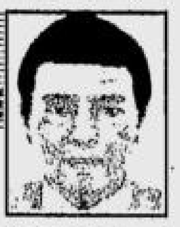

Manuel A. Alcuaz Jr.

LAST year, I was in San Francisco figuring out what could be done for a client's failing credit card venture. With the president of a sister company, we were trying to work out a less expensive way to market the cards and save the company.

The primary proponent of the credit card venture was all set to give up and go to Silicon Valley to raise capital for his new e-Vouchers project. When we told him that it might be a good idea to show a profitable track record first, he literally insulted us saying, "profits are for small minds."

That was last year. With the crash of the Nasdaq particularly the bloated dotcom stock valuations and the closure of the hundreds of dotcom companies, building companies that will satisfy and delight customers and at the same time make a good profit is again in the realm of great minds.

The dotcom boom

Between the Netscape IPO in August 1995 till the end of 1999, dotcom stock went on a wild ride. Dotcoms with no profits to show gained unrealistic valuations as the "new economy" was hyped by technology writers, stock analysts, investment bankers, stockbrokers, and dotcom entrepreneurs. While stocks of established brick and mortar companies are very closely tied to quarterly earnings, Wall Street created a separate valuation metric for dotcoms.

First they introduced the idea that the Internet was a "land grab" where companies should sacrifice profits for rapid growth. Remember that Jeff Bezos once apologized to his stockholders for making a profit.

Investment bankers initially used "discounted terminal valuation," a computation based on future imagined margins and growth. Later on when the stock valuations went so high that they could not be justified by believable future projections, investment bankers started using non-financial metrics like "eyeballs" and "page views."

The dotcom crash

By sometime last year, investors began to realize that many dotcoms were built on business models that would never produce the imagined profits. Amazon.com, with about $1.6 billion in annual revenues, can barely make a profit. Then the valuations started tumbling down.

Priceline, which sells cheap airline tickets once, had a valuation greater than three major airlines. From a high of $162, its stock is now down to $4. Yahoo is now below $20 from a high of $237. Amazon.com is now at $15 from a high of $106.

What went wrong?

Many dotcoms were designed and managed to create value for its owners and investment bankers through an IPO rather than by selling to customers at a good price and keeping cost down in order to make a profit. Traditionally, companies have grown using profits to fund expansion and marketing. Brands were built through customer satisfaction reinforced by advertising.

Dotcoms attempted to reverse the process.

1. They started with an idea they could sell to an investment banker.
2. They built a prototype to get credibility.
3. They raised money through an IPO.
4. They then spent large sums (hundreds of millions) to rapidly build a brand.
5. Get first mover advantage and get the most "eyeballs."
6. Hopefully turn them to customers.
7. Figure out how to make a business.

The "land grab" first mover advantage turned out to be very unstable.

On the Internet, the next website is only a click away. In many cases, flashy new latecomers can grab eyeballs away from the now cashless first mover.

Now that the dotcom boom has turned into doom, what have we learned? One of the major lessons we should have learned is not to trust greedy investment bankers and stockbrokers. In Wall Street, we saw the wild dotcom roller coaster ride.

Here in the Philippines, we saw the dramatic rise of BW stock to more than P100 followed by its dramatic collapse. If certain people had been less greedy and more honest, these scams would not have been foisted on innocent investors.

New Economy

Up to a year ago, it was very fashionable to talk about the "new economy," the "new rules" and "Internet time." The Internet was supposed to be a disruptive technology that would turn the economy upside down. Established "brick and mortar" companies would die or fade away and dotcom companies would rule the earth.

While there indeed is a new economy, it is an evolutionary new economy. Technology, education, trade, culture and people have brought about the change. The Internet had a major impact in shaping the new economy but so too have the telegraph, radio, telephone, television, FAX, and more recently mobile phone.

New rules

A few years ago, Andersen Consulting said, "the following fundamental economic assumptions which were the basis for business success no longer hold true:

1. Interaction and collaboration costs are no longer high. (True)
2. Physical assets no longer play a central role in customer value propositions. (False)
3. Size is no longer a limiting factor. (False)
4. Access to information is no longer limited nor restricted. (True)
5. And no longer does it take years and massive resources to build a global business. (True)

While interaction and collaboration costs were high, large organizations had significant advantage. Before the Internet, national or global communication and data trans-

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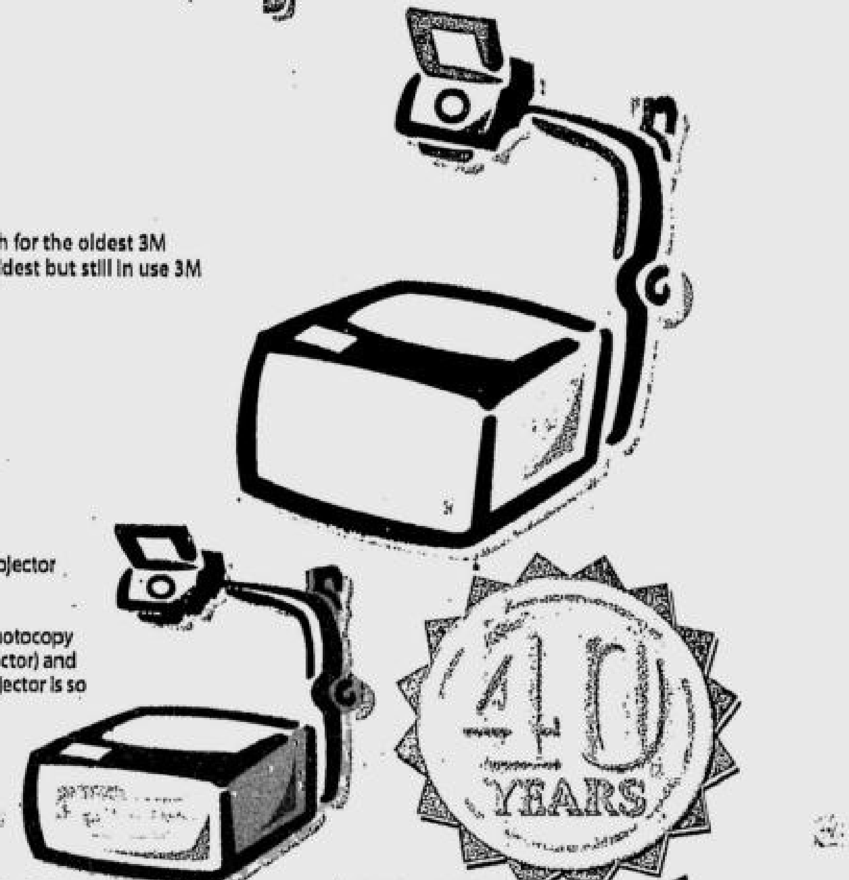

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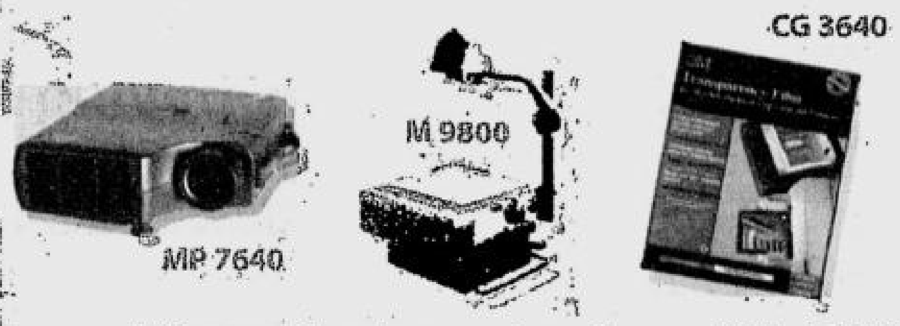

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YAP says she's more than the owner's daughter.

COO says ask from your people what you can give

BY TINA ARCEO-DUMLAO

DEAN Dipak Jain of the prestigious Kellogg School of Business says family corporations in Asia have an advantage over multinational firms because they are more cost conscious and they really take the welfare of the business and the people to heart.

But it is not always seen as an advantage to have family members run these corporations. There is always that perception that they get the job on the sole qualification that they are a son or daughter of the owner of the company.

MANAGEMENT STYLES

Christine U. Yap, the 31-year-old chief executive officer of Yapster e-Trade Inc. and chief operating officer of SourcePilipinas.com Inc., admits that it can be a problem being related to the owner. She, however, stresses that she got the job to head these new companies of the next generation of Yaps mainly on merit and qualifications.

"It works two ways—people either follow you blindly or give you a harder time because of who you are," Yap says.

Yap is in charge of building the business of SourcePilipinas.com, an e-marketplace where companies can purchase office equipment such as computers or even bond papers. These companies invariably realize cost savings because suppliers bid against each other for the contracts to supply these corporations.

SourcePilipinas and other business-to-business exchanges are already starting to change the way businesses do their purchasing. Through the online marketplaces, purchasing can be more transparent and more efficient.

Food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp., for instance, recently awarded a contract for their personal computer requirements through SourcePilipinas.com. About 11 suppliers bid for the contract and the winning bid reflected a 17-percent discount on the last purchase price for the same items.

Yap says it is a challenging job to convince companies to shift to online purchasing but she manages to rally her people to go after these companies by putting in even more than what she demands from her people.

"I've always believed that the key lies in motivating your people. I only ask from my people what I myself can give—dedication, hard work, focus and the drive to succeed," she says.

"When you are a good manager you are judged on your merits and capabilities, and being related to the owner actually becomes secondary," Yap adds.

An economics graduate from the Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada, Yap was put to work since she was 10 years old. At one time she was a cashier and bagger of the groceries in the Yap store in Davao, progressing to bookkeeper in the evenings after the store closed.

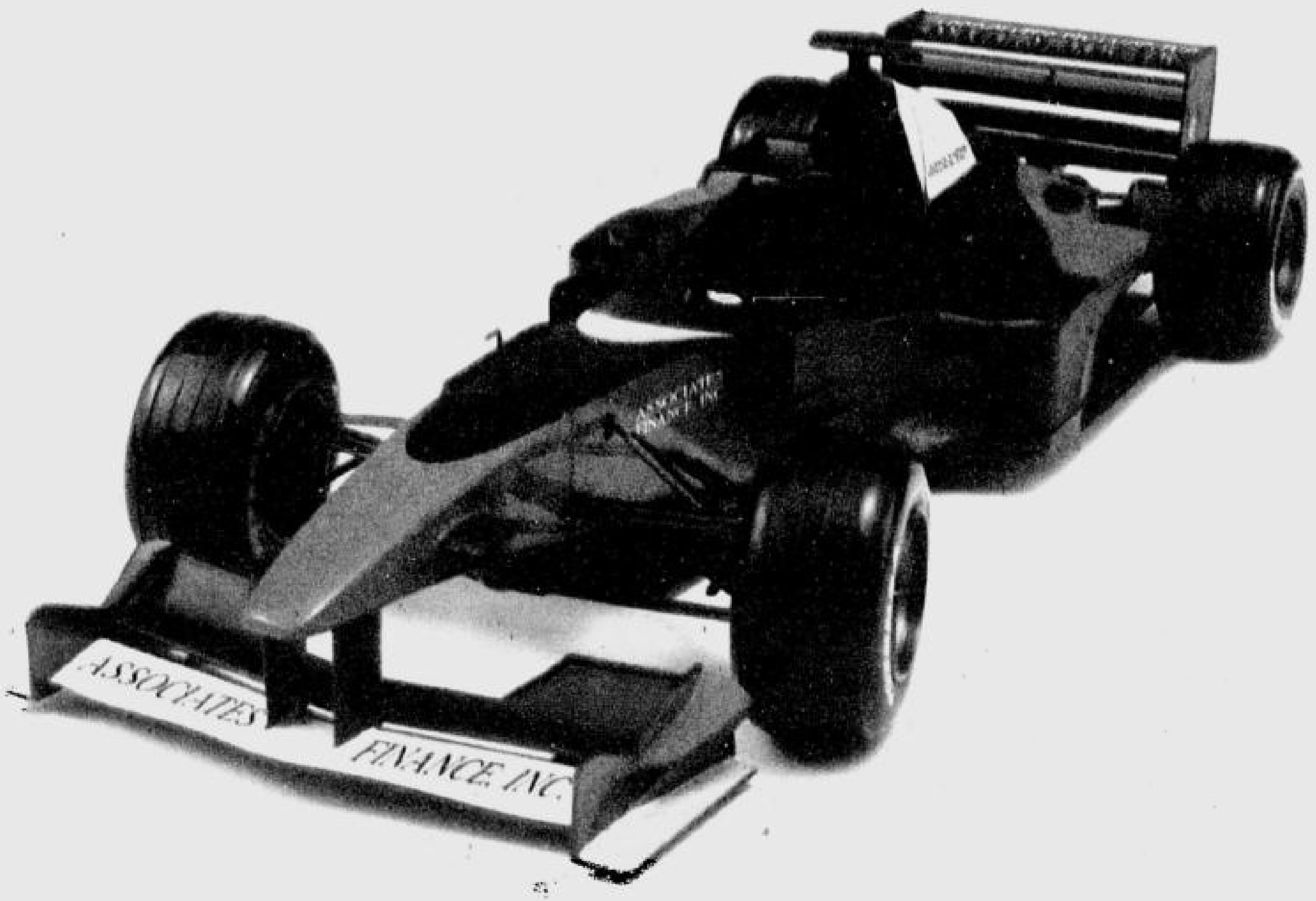
When she was in Canada, she worked as a research assistant for her professor and when she finished work, she trained as an investment analyst for a stock brokerage firm.

"I'd like to think that my dad saw the determination and drive in me, as well as some intellect, so he chose me for the job," Yap says.

As chief executive of a young company, she says she has to be very hands on.

"I meet with my senior managers every morning regarding the status of their accounts. The

COO/ C5



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Resto marks debut with a cool change

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

HENRY J. Sawaya and his partners decided to put up an English pub in the country at a time when almost everybody else was leaving. It was 1983, and the country was struggling with political unrest following the assassination of Ninoy Aquino, a crime that triggered a national protest against the Marcoses.

The pub, called The Prince of Wales, targeted foreigners and Filipino clients alike. They put it up in the Greenbelt mall. In a basement, to be exact.

They risked $400,000 or some P4 million as the exchange rate then was P10 to $1 on their investment. The gamble paid off as Sawaya was able to recover his investments in just two years.

And the pub has witnessed merry-making for 18 years.

Despite the success of The Prince of Wales, Sawaya refused to open another branch.

"The success of the Prince of Wales was due to its personalized service. I find that it's hard to maintain the standards in two different locations, which will have two different managers," says Sawaya who would go to the pub everyday from morning to nearly closing time.

He claims that he has not had a vacation since the Prince of Wales opened.

But success has its limits and Sawaya admits that while the pub's sales have been growing steadily for 16 years, the past two years saw a slowdown.

"Up until two years we have been enjoying steady growth. I attribute this to many changes in Ayala (commercial center). The opening of Glorietta affected us. It moved the traffic of people because of better parking and more choices," Sawaya reasons.

Traffic around the Prince of Wales area became difficult when the renovation of the entire mall began last year.

But he says he expects things to pick-up by the end of the year, the schedule of the new food areas in Greenbelt to open.

With slower growth and shifting customers' tastes, Sawaya decided it was time to make a change.

He and his partners under the Universal Gourmet Foods Inc., the firm that owns the pub, decided to close the place and come up with something new.

Thus, The Prince was born.

The aim was to have a name that would indicate the same ownership and quality, but at the same time show that major changes have been made.

The major change is that from a pub, The Prince is now an "authentic Mediterranean" restaurant, according to Sawaya.

"In the Philippines when you say Mediterranean, the food served is usually Italian," he shares.

The choice of the nature of the restaurant was based on health reasons.

"In the food chart, the healthiest food is Mediterranean," he says. The cuisine uses various substitutes to rice like couscous and uses a lot of olive oil and garlic.

"It is very risky to go into ethnic food because you have to create a market. But Mediterranean food is something Filipinos are used to. Filipinos like fish, rice and vegetables," Sawaya notes.

Other than the food, Universal Gourmet has also included a room where a band can play and guests can dance.

In terms of price, Sawaya says they have maintained the same price levels as the rate of the peso against the dollar. This means for example that if they used to sell beer at P26 a bottle, the equivalent of $1, now they sell it at P54.

Most of the ingredients in the restaurant are imported.

"But we do not have fine dining price. The average bill at The Prince would be P400 to P500 per person compared with some P900 for a hotel," he says.

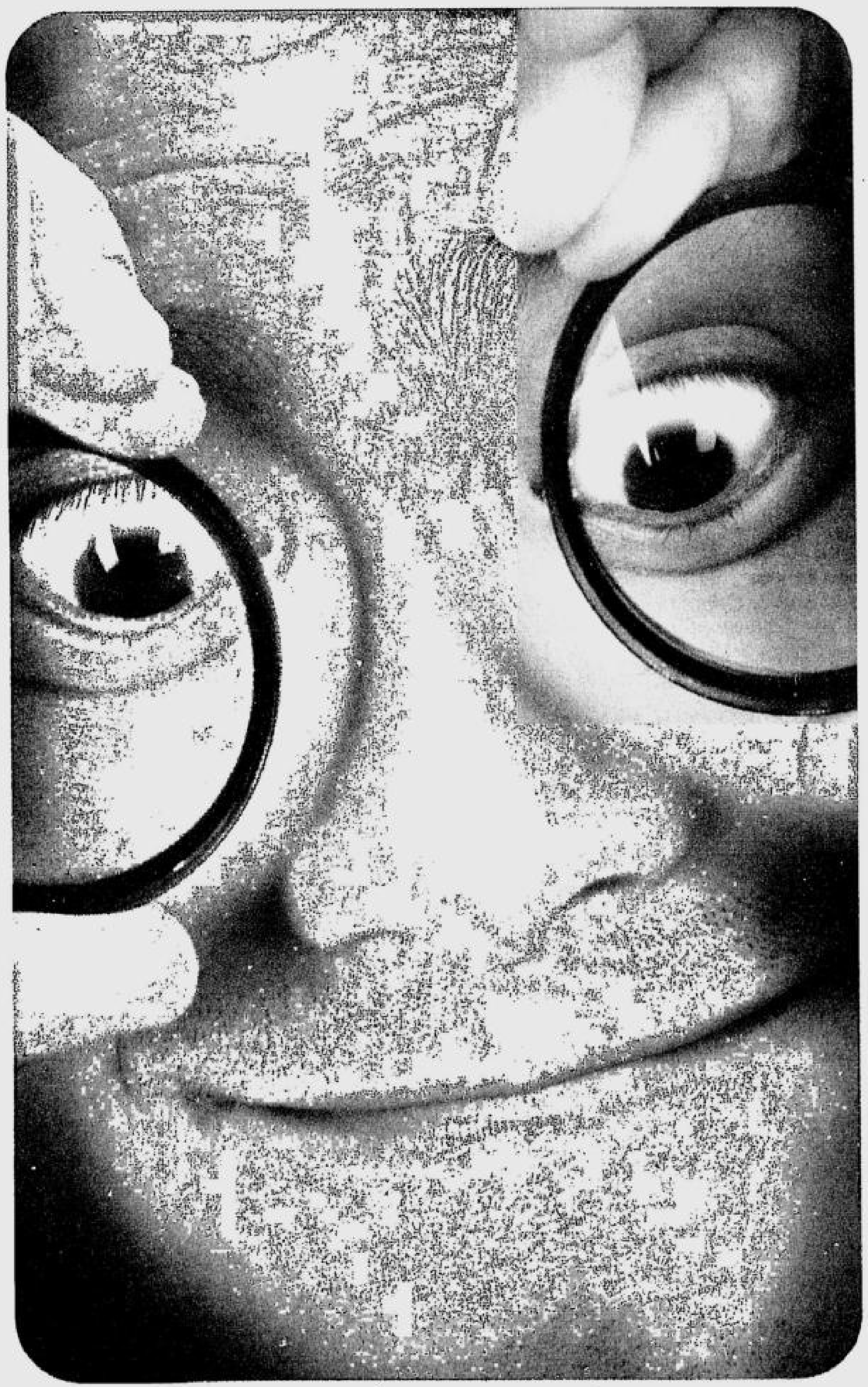
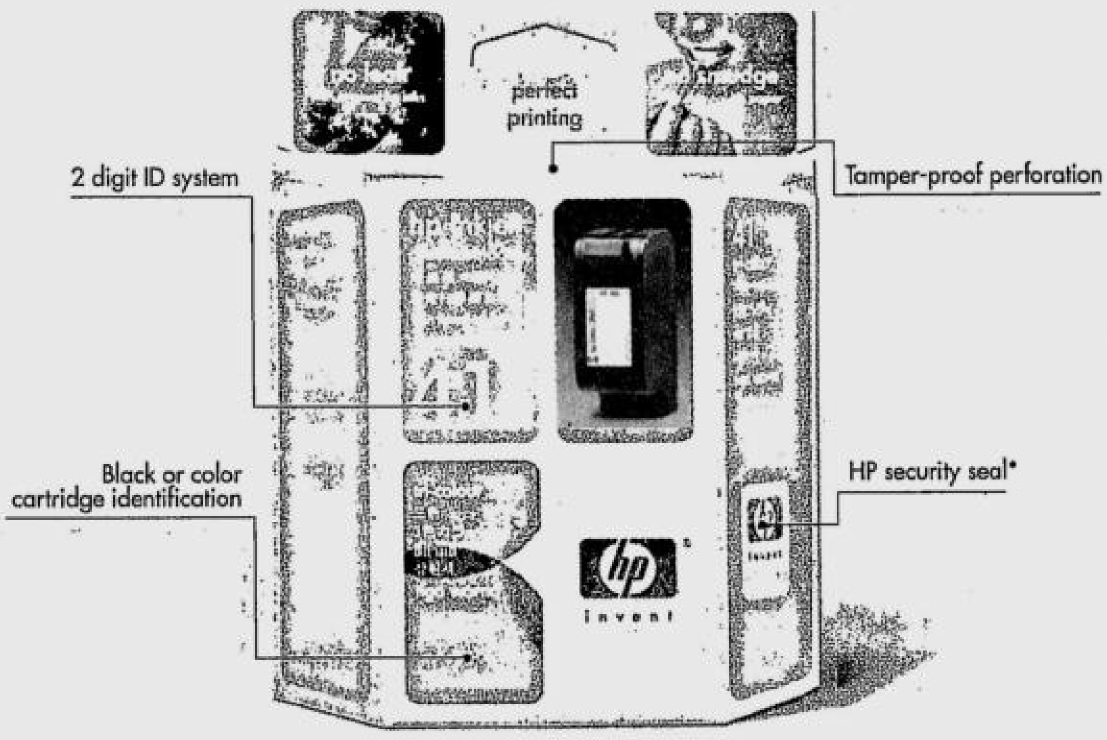
The entire place was renovated at a cost he declines to reveal, but says that it would have been cheaper to set up a new place.

As to the timing of his change, which runs smack into an economic crisis in the country, Sawaya simply says "a businessman must feel optimistic at all times."

HENRY J. Sawaya and one of his partners, Brit Ian Gray.

"It's not a consideration to close shop and retire," says the Lebanese who was naturalized as a Filipino and has lived in the Philippines for 22 years.

"I believe that in all adverse situations, that it's going to be a better tomorrow. Optimism is something the business community imposes on itself. We cannot think otherwise," he concludes.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Drug group turns 55, vows to improve health care

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

THE PHARMACEUTICAL and Healthcare Association of the Philippines celebrates its 55th anniversary with a renewed call to help the administration in its efforts to improve access to basic health care goods and services.

PHAP president Edwin Feist tells the Inquirer that PHAP has formed a committee given the task to come up with a program to improve health care, particularly of marginalized groups. The program not only covers moves to lower the prices of medicines but also to ensure that the medicines sold in the market are up to standards.

"We are very optimistic about the long-term programs and we hope to be able to help the government alleviate poverty in the country by forging a strong partnership with government for sustainable healthcare programs," Feist says.

The 55th anniversary celebration also included donations to the Red Cross, a P1-million fund for victims of recent typhoons and the eruption of Mt. Mayon, as well as the replacement of a Red Cross ambulance that was burned during the so-called Edsa III last May.

Health undersecretary Alex Padilla, who was the guest of honor during the general meeting of PHAP CEOs last July 26, welcomed the PHAP's efforts to help bring down the cost of essential medicines, particularly for diseases such as tuberculosis, polio, colds and flu, tetanus and rabies.

"Present times and conditions are so difficult that any benefit these people can get is appreciated," Padilla says in his speech at the general meeting at the Makati Shangri-la Hotel.

One of the proposed measures is the bulk procurement of medicines by PHAP members to help reduce prices of drugs distributed through the DOH as well as prevent the proliferation of counterfeit drugs in the market.

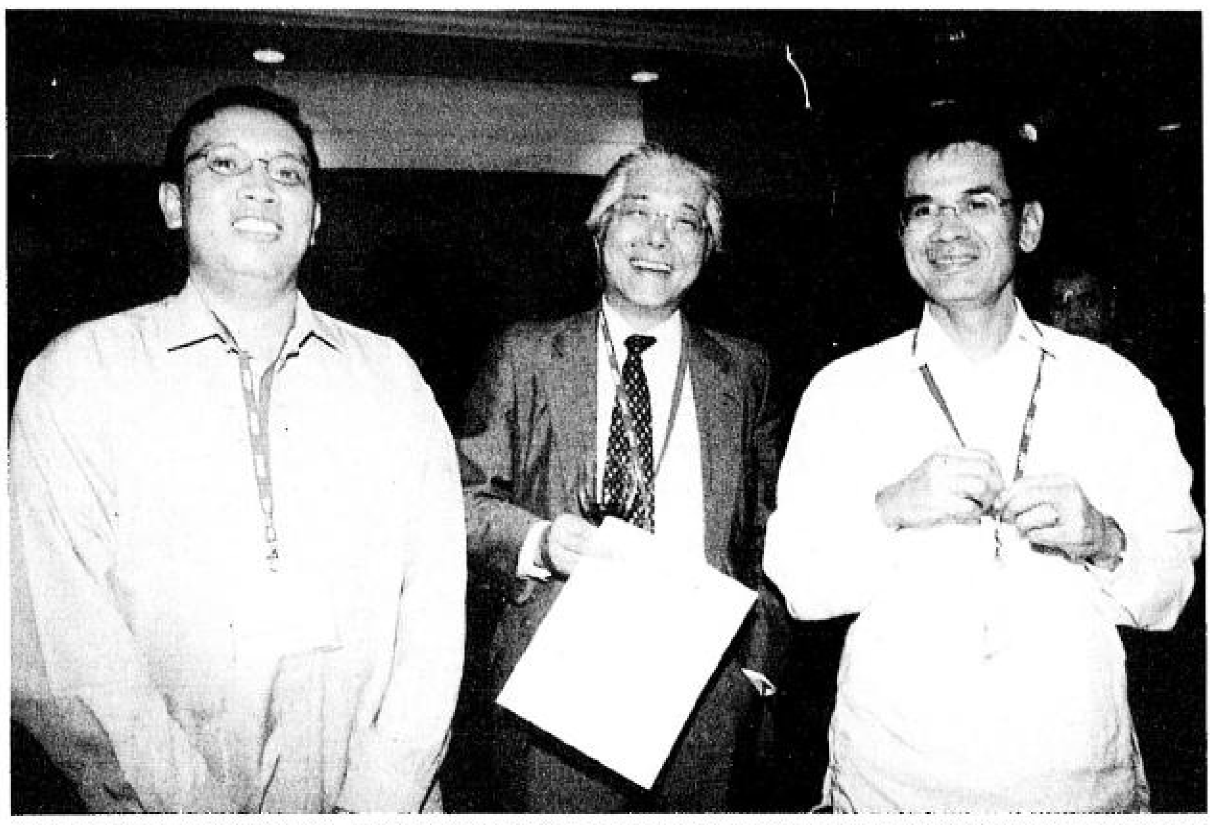
Feist stresses that the proliferation of counterfeit drugs is a worldwide issue, with these low quality drugs accounting for some 8 percent of the drugs bought and sold worldwide.

"It is of great interest to us and we want to ensure that only those drugs with guaranteed quality, safety and efficacy go to the consumers," Feist says.

PHAP consists of 88 of the country's leading companies engaged in the distribution or manufacturing of pharmaceuticals, nutritionals and medical devices.

At last count, the PHAP members accounted for over 90 percent of sales to drugstores and hospital pharmacies and over 90 percent of industry sales at the distribution level.

The PHAP is the only member-association in the Philippines of the Informational Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association based in Geneva and the World Self Medication Industry based in London.



(From left) Dr. Jose Tablante, medical director, Otsuka pharma Inc.; Tetsusaburo Hori, Otsuka president; and Victor Lapid Jr., sales and marketing manager, Janssen Pharmaceutica

(From left) Urs Flueckiger, Roche Phils. general manager; Eric Reurts, Novo Nordisk Pharma Inc. general manager and Stefan Kilian (Boehringer Ingelheim Phils. Inc. managing director

EDWIN FEIST, Abott Laboratories Inc. president and general manager

(From left) Stefan Heitmann (Metro Drug Inc. president), Eric Ruerts (Novo Nordisk general manager)

PHAP BOARD. (From left) Rey Gerardo E. Bacarro, Bayani Santos Jr., Leo P. Wassmer Jr., Edwin D. Feist, Health undersecretary Alex padilla, Reiner W. Gloor, Urs H. Flueckiger and Yew Looi Liew

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COO ...

(From page C3)

whole team meets every week to talk about the issues the different departments encounter. The sales team also meets every week to discuss member-companies' issues. All these meetings begin with a statement by me reiterating the company's objectives," Yap says.

"Participation in forming the company's goals and objectives gives my people a sense of ownership, and this is a great motivator," she says.

She looks up to her father Felipe, chair of the Philippine Stock Exchange, as her role model for management.

Yap also tries to keep herself abreast of the developments by reading books, magazines and newspapers that relate to the online business.

"I have a (bad) habit of reading a few books simultaneously. Currently, I am juggling three books—"The eMarketplace," with case studies that I find very useful for my work in SourcePilipinas; "Harry Potter Book 3," surprisingly a very entertaining read, even for adults, during the weekend; and "Tutankhamen," which I bought during my recent trip to Egypt," she says.

She gives full credit to her people, and if she sees that they care about the company and work as much as she does, then she has done her job as a manager.

"I want to get to the point where people see me as a good manager first, and daughter of owner second," she says.

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In their rush to the Web, some firms forgot brands

BY STEPHEN F. DULL

NEW research shows that customer satisfaction with eCommerce—in both the business to business (B2B) and business to consumer (B2C) sectors—is remarkably low. How come? In their rush to establish a presence on the Web, most companies failed to build strong, distinctive online brands. Here's what you should do now.

Fear distorts perspective. Wind gusts feel stronger, waves look higher and fog appears thicker when each seems an omen of something worse to come. So it should come as no surprise that so many of us were so wrong when eCommerce hit the business world of the 1990s like a storm threatening to blow away every long-held assumption about how business works and customers behave.

In the turbulent early days of the new economy, information was worse than incomplete, it was all but nonexistent. With the constant din of buzzwords—Internet-enabled! eSpeed! Network effect! First-mover advantage—and with the market moving so fast, decisions had to be made at a sprint, and often the justifications and rationales for those decisions were only thought through afterward. Many companies slapped together websites just to establish a presence on the eFrontier; others poured millions into flashy, interactive sites through which they either sold at a loss or gave away information and goods to millions of "markets of one."

Asking customers

Given all the press about the Internet putting power into customers' hands, it seems strange that so few companies bothered to ask customers what they really wanted from online commerce or gave so little thought to establishing strong online brands—that is, to creating satisfactory online experiences.

But now, in a groundbreaking series of studies, Accenture has surveyed nearly 10,000 online consumers, as well as more than 800 B2B buyers, in an effort to gain a better understanding of eBranding.

The research identifies five distinct new market segments in each sector—B2B and B2C—and clearly shows what marketers need to do to build strong eBrands. Even more important, perhaps, this research has revealed three surprising facts of online life—surprising insofar as they flatly contradict the conventional wisdom of the very recent past.

There is no new economy (at least not yet).

It turns out that in the new economy you don't spell "evolution" with an R. To be sure, the Internet and the Web will transform both business and consumer markets, eventually. But it hasn't happened yet, and it will not happen overnight.

Traditional needs still matter, and the key to success in online business is not new technology but old-fashioned marketing.

Proper marketing

But marketing doesn't mean pouring money into advertising. It means building brand equity by asking customers what they want and then consistently delivering it.

This is precisely where most online businesses—both B2B and B2C—have gone wrong. According to our research, less than half of B2B buyers and just more than half of B2C buyers are "very satisfied" with their providers' brands.

Such low levels of satisfaction are symptomatic of a failure of marketing—that is, a failure to identify and respond to the real demands of the market.

The cult of the new economy took it as a given that online competition would mainly be about price. But, in fact, neither business nor consumer buyers view price as the be-all and end-all. In the B2C market, competitive pricing accounts for no more than 13 percent of eBrand value, even for the most price-conscious segment.

B2B buyers are even less price-sensitive. That's why the 4,000-plus B2B eMarketplaces were hard hit by the recent market meltdown; their strategies were based on attracting price-driven buyers, but most B2B buyers are not price-driven.

Business buyers, especially global and multilocation companies, want the reliability, performance, service and other advantages of a respected brand, and they are willing to pay for them. On the whole, B2B buyers seem to believe that "you get what you pay for" and view low prices with caution.

eCommerce

Personalization also figured prominently in the early folklore of eCommerce. It was widely believed that businesses could woo and win buyers by using technology to get intimate with them. But while personalization is a necessary aspect of a successful online experience, it can't be expected to carry the site on its own.

Not surprisingly, people do not want to develop relationships with machines.

In general, B2C buyers rank site personalization second to last on their list of priorities. Across all segments, consumers express strong concerns about the privacy of personal information. In some consumer segments, businesses can build more brand value by collecting no information at all from their customers.

And while B2B buyers are less sensitive about privacy, our research shows that personalization makes very little difference to business buyers in any segment.

Decision-makers should therefore see a blinking yellow light when considering investments in personalization technology, which is only a small part of what the customer wants.

eSpeed kills

Don't become too beguiled by "first-mover advantage." Take the time to do it right. Buyers in both the B2B and B2C markets told us that they were dissatisfied with the first-to-market entrants who seemed to throw something up on the Web just to beat the pack.

Getting there first is meaningless unless you get there right. eBay not only got there first—it practically invented the online auction sector—it did it right.

Today 20 percent of businesses do 90 percent of online spending. Among consumers, meanwhile, 10 percent of the population does 70 percent of online buying. Dissatisfied or fence-sitting buyers thus represent a great opportunity for companies that really address their needs.

Remember that haste makes waste—and that traditional values are vastly more important to most buyers than a whiz-bang online experience. The eVanguard is there. It's just not that big yet.

That said, however, our research shows that broadband has a dramatic effect on both B2B and B2C buying patterns. A faster connection reduces frustration and increases the likelihood that customers can find what they want. As a result, broadband raises satisfaction.

B2B buyers with broadband do more online buying than the narrowband set, and those who have access to broadband at work buy even more heavily from online B2B suppliers. Among B2C buyers, those who have access to broadband both at home and at work spend disproportionately more money online than dial-up users.

Obvious? Maybe. But our study actually showed that companies could profit from subsidizing their customers' broadband access.

eCommerce is stalled

In the United States, B2B buyers make only 3 percent to 4 percent of their purchases online. This doesn't mean that business customers don't want to make transactions over the Web; in fact, most B2B buyers say they want to transact business at some level through this channel.

And our research shows business purchasing growing dramatically as buyers get more comfortable with the Web.

But only 18 percent of B2B websites offer purchase capability. The overwhelming majority are information-only sites, and many of these, unfortunately, don't provide information that is organized and delivered in a way that encourages customers to make purchases.

Instead of building brand value, such sites erode it. This is a huge and obvious barrier to the spread of B2B eCommerce.

B2C sites fare little better. Guided by the myths of online brand value, many companies have invested heavily in initiatives that deliver the wrong experiences to the wrong consumers—if, indeed, they deliver anything at all.

Brandwise.com, OnePriceCDs.com, Buy.com and ValueAmerica.com, to name a few, bled red ink as they strove to build market share by, among other things, offering extremely low-priced—or even free—merchandise.

Yet our research shows conclusively that the most avid online consumers are the least likely to be paying attention to price, and that price is a minor consideration in most online purchases.

Value through segmentation

A sound strategy of segmentation is the prudent approach to building eBrand value. Business strategies for the online market should offer experiences designed to meet the real needs and preferences of real online customer segments.

One size does not fit all—one product or one experience will not satisfy all segments. Thus, companies seeking to build brand value online have three options: develop one brand and target one segment; target several segments and develop a different brand for each one; or take one of three routes to offer different experiences under the umbrella of a single brand.

For example, Wal-Mart's site offers a broad selection of reputable brands across a wide spectrum of product categories, and at attractive prices, if not the lowest. By contrast, Federated Department Stores target multiple customer segments by offering different Web experiences for each of its branded outlets, including Macy's and Bloomingdale's.

The third strategic option is visible, at least in its embryonic stage, in E-Trade's market segmentation strategy. The most profitable segment of the online brokerage market is active traders who may trade once every three or four days or dozens of times every day.

Active traders demand faster executions and more timely information than occasional investors do; Power E-Trade offers services tailored to their exacting demands.

This is not simply a matter of offering better prices to big spenders; active traders get a distinctive package of services and benefits not available—and probably not of interest to—less avid market players.

Another way to offer a different experience under the same brand is to use technology to customize the branded Web experience while the consumer is actually using the site so that it more closely meets that consumer's specific needs.

We can imagine, for example, an online bookseller offering each needs-based segment a different online experience. The home page for bargain hunters, for instance, might include a list of value-priced bestsellers, periodic promotions and a full menu of categories.

The home page for more time-sensitive consumers might center on a powerful search function and might be more streamlined to feature favorite categories and enable faster page loads.

Finally, consumers should be able to choose the Web experience they want for any particular occasion. Again using our imaginary bookseller as an example, new customers (whose online behavior is not yet established) can select to have a bargain-hunting or time-saving experience. Also, this approach can enable multi-category eBrands (for example, Amazon.com or Priceline.com) to better satisfy individual customers across a variety of purchase categories.

Succeeding at online commerce demands not only technical savvy but also market knowledge. Buyers have a surprisingly broad spectrum of intensity in their preferences.

Although price is a relatively unimportant factor for most B2B buyers, for example, it is the most important consideration for one segment of the business sector.

The same B2B buyers may have different preferences depending on the types of products they are buying. Even company size matters. Buyers for large companies are much more brand-sensitive than those from small companies, and the more experience buyers have with online commerce, the more brand-sensitive they become.

Similarly, B2C buyers report that companies active in multiple product categories do not achieve uniformly high levels of customer satisfaction. For example, the retailer Target has high customer satisfaction scores in apparel but relatively low scores in toys.

Such complexity can be navigated successfully, but not without a map. Here are four strategy fundamentals that every company should keep in mind when approaching the eCommerce arena.

Choose target customers

There is great benefit to targeting the customers you want with the benefits they want, although learning what they want takes time. The good news is that the Internet has cut that time substantially.

Market research that used to take four months can now be done online in six weeks or less. The online experience itself is ideally suited to a rapid cycle of continual refinement using customer input—that is, taking rough concepts to customers, letting them help you refine them and then repeating the cycle until you get it right.

But however the job is done, focusing on target customers must be a priority. Neglecting to collect information about needs, preferences and profitability is a disastrous mistake.

Build marketing muscle

When it comes to marketing, many businesses, especially in the B2B sector, are neophytes. But companies need to develop basic marketing skills to deliver, profitably, what customers really want.

At a minimum, that means using market research to uncover customer needs. It means analyzing the impact of improvements in users' online experiences on both preference and profit. And it also means applying your understanding of what customers really want to an eBrand strategy implementation so that the online purchase experience and customer service are improved.

Such skills will continue to pay dividends when the next technology wave transforms the Internet once again.

Integrate the traditional with the nontraditional

Too many businesses have become infatuated with technology that their customers neither want nor understand. If target customers really prefer to use the telephone, don't force them to use your website so that you can lower your cost.

IT customers use the technology they want, when they want. Target the more expensive and elaborate technologies (such as online video or telephony) to the situations that most affect customer preference, purchase and loyalty.

Drugstore.com is a good example. Customers can use the site to fill most prescriptions. If there's a problem, they can use e-mail or the phone to contact the company. A customer service message is displayed prominently, and the service customers get is actually helpful and friendly.

E-mail is answered personally; problems prompt a phone call from a customer service representative. How obvious! What's remarkable is how rare that is on the Web.

Focus on EBIT, not bits of 'e'

Companies need to focus their online efforts on things that contribute to the bottom line—whether it's lowering costs or raising revenues. Too many eCommerce efforts do neither. Don't invest in customer technologies without the business case for customer preference and profit. And think more broadly about how the eExperience serves the customer and drives your profit.

Some customers may never want to buy online, but they may use the Web extensively for research before they buy.

The best sites recognize these differences. A home appliance manufacturer, for example, won't sell a washer online. But the company will help customers do research and find local retailers—and will even provide links to online retailers.

At the height of the recent technology-stock bubble, a bestseller predicted that the old economy would be blown to bits. In truth, the only thing blown to bits was the stock valuation of allegedly new-economy companies.

The dotcom frenzy is history now, gone to join Tulipmania in the annals of mass hysteria. Good riddance. Because for a while, new economy noise temporarily drowned out all talk of business basics.

But it's clear now that business basics cannot be ignored. Among the most important of these basics is this: Know your customers. Only companies that identify what customers really want, and position themselves to provide it, can build strong brands—in any market economy. *Accenture*

Goodbye, dotcom . . .

(From page C2)

mission required expensive leased lines, mainframes, and networking hardware and software which cost millions and took years to build.

With the Internet, the cost of interaction and collaboration has been drastically reduced.

This has tilted competitive advantage in favor of smaller and more nimble firms. Large established firms will have to discard their old expensive and obsolete technologies and take advantage of the Internet.

They will have to change their organizational strategy from vertical integration to greater outsourcing and partnering. The Internet will enable organizations of any size to interact with their customers more effectively and to manage their collaboration better at dramatically lower cost.

It is not true that physical assets no longer play a central role in customer value proposition.

The story of Amazon.com was often used to argue that physical assets had lost importance. In order to sell books nationwide or worldwide, traditional bookstores had to build hundreds or even thousands of branch stores. Amazon.com achieved global reach without a single branch! Therefore physical assets are no longer important. Not true!

Without the use of physical assets, Amazon.com would not be able to fulfill your order. You would not receive your book. Publishers still print books. And Amazon.com uses UPS, a courier company to pick up and deliver the books to online customers.

In the early days, the courier got the books from publishers, wholesalers and other bookstores. Today, Amazon.com has built highly automated warehouses from where UPS picks up the boxed orders—books, CDs, etc.

The courier has a network of distribution centers, airplanes, trucks and delivery vehicles. The physical assets used may have changed but the fulfillment of your Amazon.com orders are highly dependent on a delivery system based on a combination of information and communication technologies and a lot physical assets—warehouses, distribution centers, airplanes and vehicles.

Limiting factor

Andersen Consulting stated that in the physical world there were limits to scale. One player, maybe two, will dominate each category. This has been proven to be not true. As it turns out within categories, there are many market niches wherein small players can live and make a profit. Furthermore, new technologies and strategies appear which can overturn current leaders.

Access to information

The Internet provides access to vast amounts of information and data from worldwide sources. The limiting factor now is time to read, analyze and understand the data that we get every time we download e-mail or surf the Web.

Individuals and organizations can be so much more effective at low cost by learning to take advantage of the access to information made possible by the Internet. Buyers had few sources of product, price and competitive information.

The Internet can deluge them with alternatives. Sellers had to conduct expensive market research to learn about buyer needs. Sellers can now gather a lot of information about customers and use them to provide better products and services.

Time to market is now much shorter. It no longer takes years and massive resources to build a global business.

On the Web, new markets can be opened very quickly. Virtual organizations can be quickly built to source, produce, market, sell and deliver goods and services.

What should we have learned?

Now that the dotcom bubble has burst, what should we have learned:

1. Not to trust greedy people who offer instant riches.
2. If it does not make pesos or cents, it does not make sense.
3. Investors are not your customers. The IPO should not be the ultimate objective. Hopefully, it is a good start.
4. Making a market is harder than it seems.
5. Throwing money to build a brand in cyberspace is a very bad strategy.
6. The "land-grab" and "gold-rush" strategies don't work because, unlike land and gold deposits, cyberspace does not seem to be limited.
7. Therefore you do not have to work haphazardly in Internet time. Balance speed and quality.
8. The Internet is not as disruptive as we thought. It is a great enabler.
9. Very few pure dotcoms have made money.
10. Physical assets still have value.
11. Click and mortar usually beats Brick and Mortar or pure dotcom.

(Note: The above is adopted from Jerry Unseen's article in Fortune Magazine, May 2001, "Lessons from the Dot.Com Crash."

This article reflects the personal opinion of the author who is a member of the Management Association of the Philippines, president of Systems Sciences Consult Inc. and member of the Board of Trustees of De La Salle University Professional Schools Inc. The MAP Secretariat and the author may be reached via mapsec@globe.com.ph.)

Chinese traders won't flee, won't invest either

(From page C1)

surely soften, but I don't see investors pulling out," he says.

He added that most businessmen right now have a "wait-and-see attitude. They're not pulling out their investments, but they're not infusing more money either."

Which is why he thinks the government may have a difficult time selling the $500 million worth of bonds that it floated early last month.

"I feel they will have a hard time selling this because investors won't be keen on buying the bonds anymore. Bond prices will really go down," he says.

Death by debts

The Mindanao problem is not helping the economy, according to Go, but this is not the main source of the country's hardships.

"The real problem is that we're very dollar-dependent. Debt servicing is giving us a very big headache because of this," he explains.

He says paying just the interest for the country's debts poses a huge problem for the government.

"Our exposure right now, I think, is around $50 billion. We're paying roughly $140 million a year just for interest," he tells the INQUIRER.

Go says it is quite hard to say when the economy will start getting better, but he believes businesses can still do well despite the economic slump.

"Bad economy doesn't apply to everything. It's how you manage your business," he says.

How the Chinese do it

Contrary to popular belief, Go says the Chinese are not the ones controlling the Philippine economy.

"We're mostly small- and medium-scale businessmen. The big guns, if you will check, are not Chinese," he adds.

He explains that it just seems that the Chinese are dominating the economy because of their vast exposure in the trade business.

"But we're just on the second and third layers of business. It just so happened that most of the traders we see owning those grocery stores, drugstores or supermarkets are Chinese," he says.

Go adds that the likes of Lucio Tan, Henry Sy and John Gokongwei are more the exceptions than the rule.

"The Filipinos are actually the ones controlling their own economy. The Chinese are happy just to trade," he explains.

Favorite targets

But kidnappers do not seem to agree with Go that the Chinese are not the "big guns" of Philippine business.

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal Arroyo is the first Philippine president to set foot in Chinatown in 55 years.

For years now, the Chinese have been the kidnappers' favorite targets.

But this, like the economic slump, is not about to drive the Chinese away.

"Of course, we feel bad when there are kidnappings, but that's about it. None of the Filipino-Chinese businessmen are thinking of pulling out their businesses from the Philippines," he declares.

Early last month, news came out that Chinese parents were shipping off their kids to schools in China to avoid being kidnapped.

"This has been going on for a long time, and not because of kidnapping. This practice of sending kids outside the country to study has been going on for the last 10 years," Go explains.

If there really were an increase in the rate of Chinese young people being sent to China to study, Go says the numbers are not that significant.

"This is exaggerated. Chinese parents just want their kids to study the Chinese language. They just want their children to have better education," he says.

But this does not mean that the country lacks good Chinese schools.

Besides, Go believes that the government is doing its best to protect the Filipino-Chinese community.

"Especially with the recent creation of the National Anti-Crime Commission, I think the government is on the right track," he says.

He adds that the Filipino-Chinese community has been in close contact with the Philippine National Police.

"We're coordinating very well with (PNP chief) Larry Mendoza. There have been no reports of kidnapping for the past several weeks. I hope we'll be able to maintain this," he says.

Doing their share

Since the government has been very helpful to the Filipino-Chinese community, Go says they are also doing their share to cooperate with the government.

"We at the Chinese Filipino Business Club are doing our best to make the Chinese-Filipino businessmen achieve a closer relationship with the Filipino society," he says.

Most of the Business Club's projects are done hand in hand with the government. These include drug consciousness campaigns, beautification and clean and green projects, donation of school buildings and books to needy barangays, donation of fire trucks and peace-and-order symposia.

Go says they have also been donating money as well as blood for the Filipino soldiers in Basilan.

They also worked for the passage of the Administrative Naturalization Law of 2000.

"We're looking at around 40,000 aliens to become Filipino citizens through administrative processes," he says.

Go adds the Filipino-Chinese community is very appreciative of the government's efforts to bridge the gap between the native Filipinos and the Filipino-Chinese.

"President Macapagal-Arroyo is actually the first sitting President to set foot on Chinatown in 55 years," he discloses.

The Filipino-Chinese community pledged allegiance to the Philippine flag last June 11.

What's brewing?

After the successful passage of the Administrative Naturalization Law of 2000, Go says the Business Club is now pushing for the accreditation of Chinese medicine and doctors.

"We're already talking to Senators (Juan) Flavier and (Noli) de Castro for initial study. They've been very supportive. They said they will support the bill," he says.

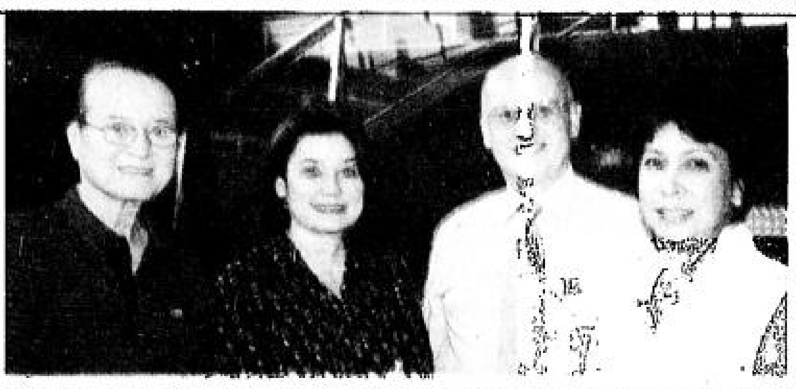
Go explains that Chinese herbal medicine will serve as a good alternative to expensive antibiotics that people have to buy for certain illnesses.

"An antibiotic can easily cost you P50 a capsule. A common person cannot afford this. But there are herbal medicines that can cure the same illness at a more reasonable cost," he says.

He stresses that the Filipino-Chinese community is pushing for this with the consumers' welfare in mind and not the profits that this will create.

"What we're after is the cheaper cost of medicines for the buying public and not the trade. Most of our medicine are imported also, but if we can have the same effect at a lower price, why not," he says.

MAITEL Miñana Cacho: The Palms Country Club membership head



THE PALMS Club Advisory Board chairman Vicente Ayllon, Menchu Henson, International Leisure Consultant's Guy Guillemard and Marilen Espiritu

Exclusive club taps Alabang residents

CHARLES Rappaport with Ramon Dimacali

JOSEPHINE Gotianun-Yap and Lennie Mendoza

THE PALMS Country Club in Filinvest, Alabang, presented a review and update of its membership mix and profile of members to its Club Advisory Board recently.

Being a top-end membership club, it is not surprising that half of the membership profile are heads of companies, residing in the Ayala, Alabang Village (43 percent of the total) and are predominantly in their mid-40s.

Some 96 percent are Filipinos with an average of two to three children and 85 percent of them have children.

In the membership segment mix, 79 percent are individual membership and the rest are leading corporations.

With a very clear focus on its targeted membership profile and reconciling this with the outcome of initial membership sales, the group was more than satisfied with the results.

Filinvest Alabang Inc. (FAC) has a membership sales team dedicated to The Palms Country Club. The team has successfully confirmed a total of 435 membership shares in record time.

MANUEL Gonzales, Josephine Gotianun-Yap, Edza Gonzales and Jose Sandejas

EDILBERTO Bravo

Turning fun into serious business

ON any given weekend, millions of children worldwide sit riveted in front of television. On these homework-free days, parents allow their kids to watch the latest blunders of Dexter and Deedee in "Dexter's Laboratory," or the newest capers of the "Powerful Girls." Ito Feliciano is one of them.

Feliciano is not a gradeschooler, nor does he flick the remote to Cartoon TV occasionally as a means to escape the demands of his highly charged life. This man, a trim gentleman with salt-and-pepper hair and respectable eyeglasses garbed in tasteful sports shirt and a pair of Allen-Edmonds, is a picture of style and flair.

Feliciano needs to switch to Cartoon Network intermittently to gather more information about Dexter and the network's other two-dimensional caboodle. After all, he is the president of Bates Licensing and Entertainment Inc., the licensing arm of Cartoon Network and Warner Bros. Consumer Products in the Philippines.

"We're the official licensing agency for Warner Bros. and Cartoon Network," he explains. Being the official representative of these two animation giants in Manila, Feliciano has the task of negotiating on behalf of the companies' numerous trademark brands before they are used on any consumer product.

"We're kind of like the eyes, ears and mouth of Warner and Cartoon Network with regard to consumer products."

Not much TV

Admittedly, Feliciano does not keep an eye on the TV shows as keenly as their throngs of juvenile followers. "I know I should watch Cartoon Network more than I do but I don't," he confesses sheepishly, grinning like an errant schoolboy. "But I find that I don't need to watch TV as long as the understanding of the properties and what they represent are crystal clear. Plus the companies are very good in providing information to start with."

This result-oriented manager spends part of his working day going around malls talking to retailers and observing consumers. "I guess my extensive understanding of the strategic part of the business comes from observing, rather than from watching, TV," he says.

However, what gives away Feliciano's essential passion for his job is the throng of stuffed Warner Bros. and Cartoon Network toys crowding the shelves of his office's meeting room. More like a child's fantasy of a play paradise rather than a formal convention place where negotiations are inked, the room bursts in an overload of colors and shapes. Thus, despite the darkening skies outside, a palpable sense of fun pervades within the four walls of the boardroom.

"My nieces, nephews and friends who have regular office jobs think that in many ways this is not a job," he says smiling with obvious satisfaction. "The very unconventional nature of the job makes it fun. In dealing with entertainment, there are always new things happening with regard to marketing programs, worldwide promotions and tie-ups with companies like Burger King and McDonald's which we execute on a local basis."

FELICIANO

Dedicated, yet unconventional. Seriously fun. Such attributes describe not just Feliciano's job, nor his attitude toward work, but his choice of footwear as well. One brand manages to combine such seemingly diverse characters into a seamless configuration: Allen-Edmonds.

Indeed, Allen-Edmonds carries a variety of styles that fit casual or day or nightwear. Combined with ease, superb design qualities and impeccable craftsmanship, Allen-Edmonds has become a token symbol of sorts for men who have a resolute sense of what they want in life. Wasn't it Allen-Edmonds pairs that took US presidents George Bush, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush to their respective inaugurations?

Taz devil

These days, there is unabashed excitement in Ito's office as his team gears up for the year-end release of the movie "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" from Warner Bros. Based on the popular and critically acclaimed novel by J. K. Rowling, the movie is expected to rake in the megabucks and spur a clamor for products bearing the bespectacled image of the young wizard. Notwithstanding the zealous enthusiasm for the young hero, Ito acknowledges that Potter is not exactly his favorite animation character.

"I'm a Tasmanian Devil kind of person," he reveals smilingly. "I like the fact that he is unpredictable and a little bit out of control but still a very likeable personality. His being a small, independent character appeals to me."

Which to a great extent characterizes Ito's own sense of enterprise and independence. His entry into the licensing business, for one, resulted not from a keen interest in the trade but more from a stroke of pure luck. While living in Hong Kong, Ito stumbled upon a newspaper ad in search of a licensing official for Warner Bros. Guided merely by his fondness for Warner Bros.' cartoons ("Warner has more humor. It is more offbeat and cutting-edge."), he promptly applied and, much to his surprise, got the job.

Which probably explains why the values of audacity and imagination inherent in Allen-Edmonds shoes appeal to Ito greatly. Unique qualities abound in the making of every Allen-Edmonds pair. These include the 360-degree stitched Goodyear welt, perforated linings for breathability, shankless and nailless construction and comfortable cork lining.

And with a remarkable array of styles to choose from, Ito can perform his demanding job with ease and elegance. He can take his pick from styles that run the gamut from Calfskin, Burnished Calfskin, Chamois and Patent Leather. In fact, Allen-Edmonds shoes are made from a variety of leathers that include—aside from those mentioned—Nappa Calf, Shell Cordovan, Chromexcel Leather, Waxed Leather, Suede, Nubuck and Exotic.

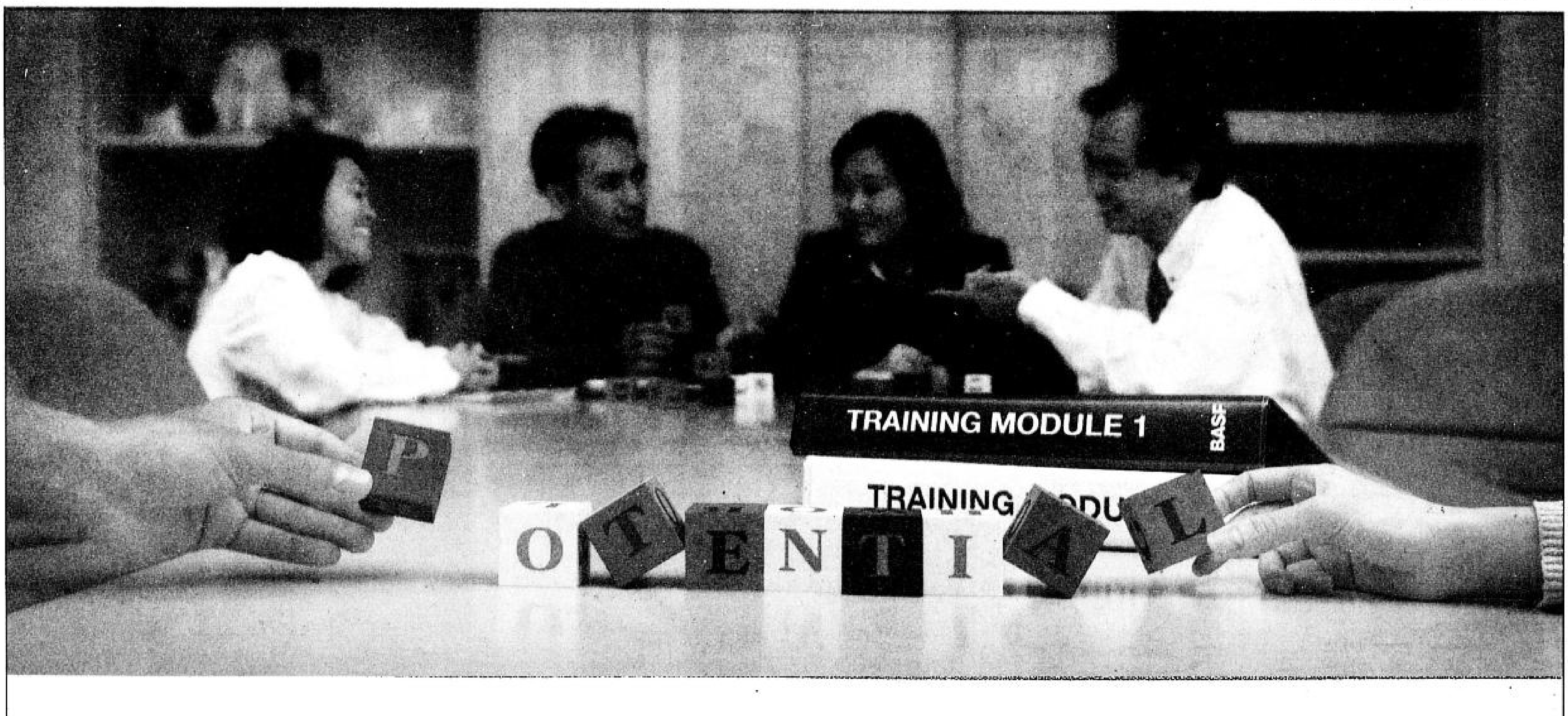
The fun of it

So what does a man who makes money from the business of amusement do for fun? "I play tennis for leisure, run for therapy and sleep for indulgence," he enumerates laughingly. But when the weather is fair, Ito boards his Ford Explorer Sports Track and drives to the rough roads of Anilao before donning his scuba outfit to explore with the denizens of the deep. "Diving is my biggest thing right now which I try to do as much as possible—if my schedule permits it. I've been to dive sites in Batangas and Puerto Galera," he relates.

Too, he dreams of going on a long mountain climbing trip to the slopes of the Himalayas. But until Harry Potter, Scooby Doo and the Powerpuff Girls get their big day on the silver screen, the heights of Anapurna will have to wait.

The style, the man

They say a man's journey begins with a single step, but it helps that one wears the right shoes when he arrives. In any case, trudging the corporate terrain in a pair of Allen-Edmonds certainly gives Ito his adrenaline fix. The man definitely fits his shoes. Epicurean style and impeccable taste make a likely marriage with each stride this man makes. Widely known for its flawless craftsmanship and lightweight feel, Allen-Edmonds shoes lend a barely-there fit. Certainly perfect for the man who wants to be where the action is—whether on the summit of a mountain or at the high pressure environment of one's own business.



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Slowdown calls for fast-paced R&D

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

ONE of the biggest drawbacks to succeeding an industry legend as chief executive officer is the endless comparisons and the added pressure to succeed.

Many buckle under the pressure, but not Craig Barrett who took over the helm of microchip giant Intel Corp. from visionary Andy Grove in 1998. He turned it from almost a pure microchip processor for personal computers into a diversified company with powering the Internet as its main goal.

Barrett has made headway in fulfilling his vision to expand Intel's market, knowing that it can not rely on the personal computer market alone, but now he is faced by another challenge—the severe decline in the semiconductor industry that is considered the worst since 1985.

He, however, explains in a press briefing during his one-day visit last week that he looks at the decline in the market as an opportunity to invest even more—not less—to prepare the company for the inevitable rebound in the market.

Other companies, not just in the semiconductor or computer business, should also look at these economic challenges in the same way.

"We have to have an understanding of what the future holds. We must be optimistic and we should prepare for the rebound. In Intel, we take this opportunity in the middle of a recession to improve on customer service and continue investing in research and technology to come up with new products, new services for the future," he says.

Barrett stresses that cutting back too much on capital expenditures and operating expenses may do more harm than good to a company as these drastic moves can leave these companies too weak to compete when the economy turns a corner.

SIXTY-YEAR-OLD Intel chief Craig Barrett wants his firm to be more than just a chipmaker.

He, however, says it is prudent for companies to cut back on unnecessary expenses to conserve meager resources, but not too much that even the core operations will be hurt.

"I think the companies that are cutting back too much are doing a big disservice to their customers," Barrett says.

New microprocessor plant

Intel for instance launched in the Philippines the newest microprocessors for mobile computing, based on the latest 0.13 micron process technology for wafer fabrication. The chip, which is 1/1000 the width of the human hair means more, smaller and faster transistors per wafer, which increases performance while requiring less power.

Barrett was here to announce the operation of the first assembly, test and manufacturing site to implement Intel's latest breakthrough manufacturing technology. The Philippines is the first site to use the technology, to be followed over the next six months with similar ATM sites in Malaysia and Costa Rica.

The new site forms part of Intel's $11.5-billion capital expenditure budget this year, a big part of which will go to research and development.

Preparing for the future

"We have to prepare for the future," says the former Stanford University professor who now works in a cubicle 50-feet away from Andy Grove.

Barrett adds that continuing to invest may not look good to financial analysts who are looking at profitability but he says he is not one to think only of profitability.

"If I would only think about profitability then the way to go is to reduce capital, but that is not how I see it. We want to continue to invest in new products, capacity and manufacturing capability," he says.

The Philippines represents an important part of Intel's game plan as shown by the launch of the new technology here.

"Intel Philippines plays a key role in supplying global demand for our fastest processors with this assembly and test responsibility. The new manufacturing process is promoting the value of the Intel Philippines operations while increasing the skills of the Philippine workforce," Barrett says.

Investing in R&D

Barrett says that with the major role that the country plays in Intel's worldwide operations, the company will infuse more investments here, especially for research and development.

The launch of the new microchip technology is part of Barrett's vision to increase Intel's already formidable presence in the computer industry.

Intel has earmarked $11.5 billion for capital expenditures this year, allowing it to develop and introduce new products.

Of this, $7.5 billion is earmarked for worldwide expansion. The Philippines stands to get a portion of the amount, mostly for the manufacturing facilities.

The 60-year-old Barrett is a metallurgical engineer by profession and received his masters and Ph.D. degrees from Stanford. He joined the faculty for a while and then joined Intel in 1974 as a technology development manager.

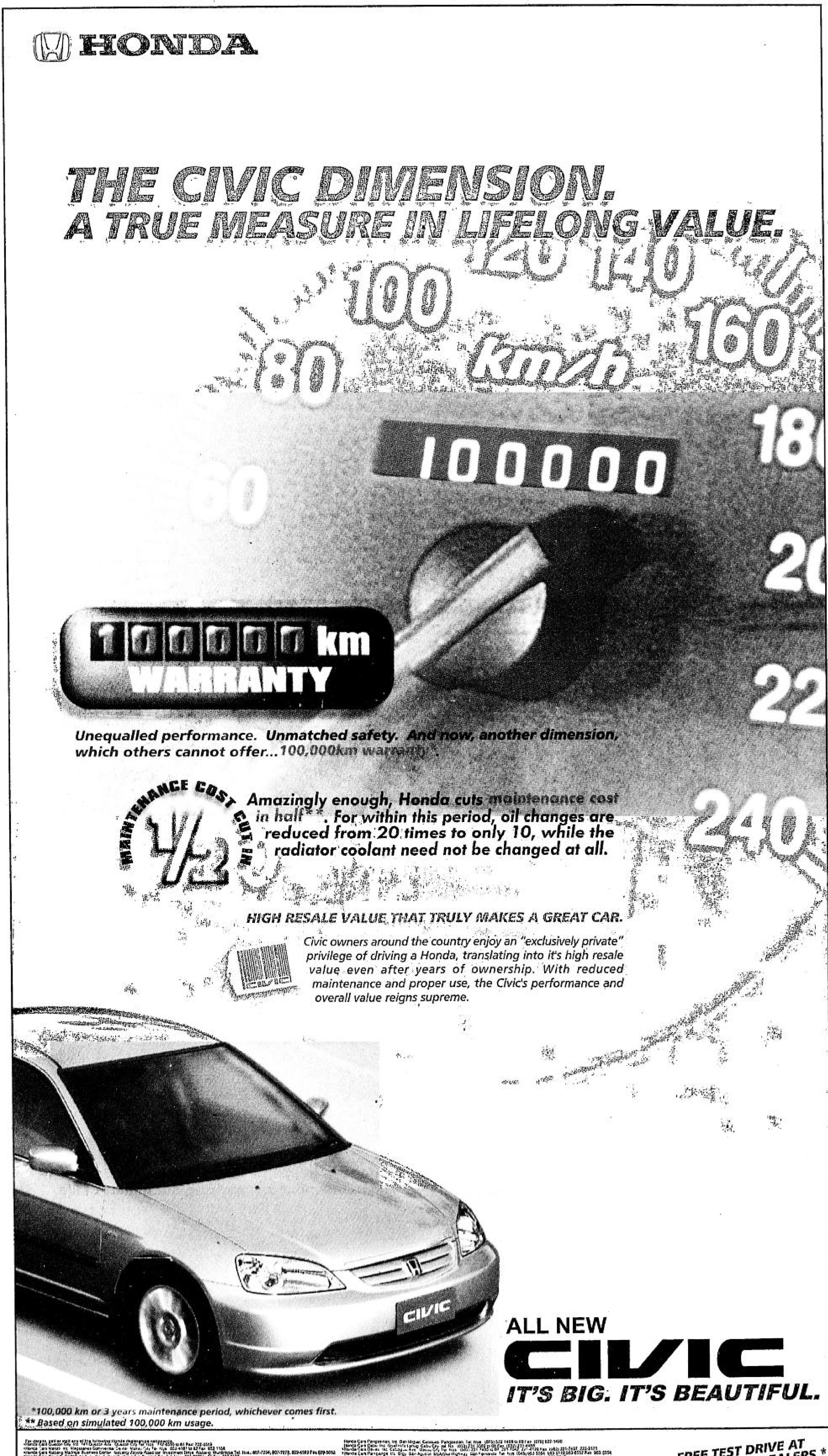
The Barrett era

He was vice president in 1984, SVP in 1987 and EVP in 1990. He was elected to Intel's board of directors in 1992 and then named COO the following year. He became Intel's fourth president in May 1997 and eventually the CEO in 1998.

If his predecessor Andy Grove made history for making Intel the giant microprocessor company that it is today, how does Craig Barrett want to be known for?

Barrett answers that he wants the next generation Intel to be a company with an expanded influence and role in the Internet era.

"The next generation Intel will be a company applying itself firmly on the building blocks of the Internet," he says.



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'Urian Anthology' celebrates Pinoy cinema of the '80s

THE MANUNURI ng Pelikulang Pilipino and television industry leader Antonio P. Tuviera will launch "The Urian Anthology, 1980-1989" on Aug. 9, 6 p.m., at the Via Mare Penthouse of the Philippine Stock Exchange Center, East Tower, Exchange Road, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City.

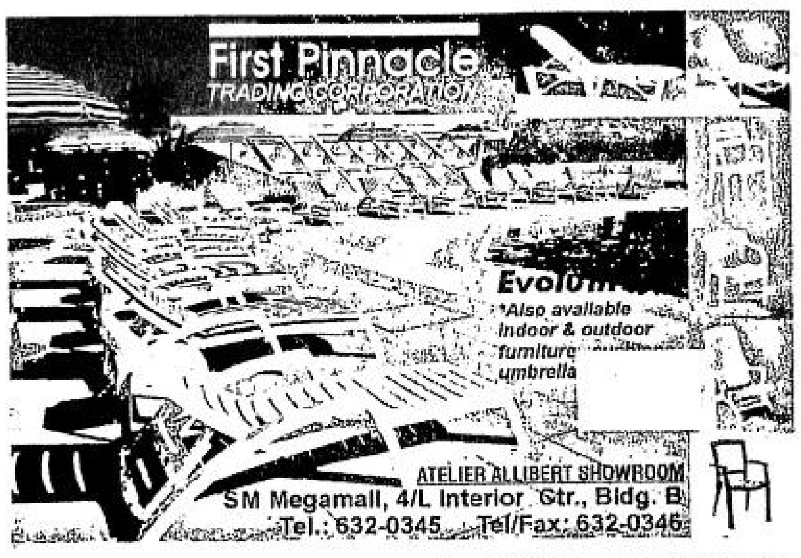
Published by Tuviera and edited by Nicanor G. Tiongson, "The Urian Anthology" gathers the key essays and reviews in the 1980s of the Manunuri, the society of respected film critics that hands out the annual Gawad Urian. It also contains a filmography of Philippine movies in the '80s.

Part I consists of 16 essays on the major structures and circumstances of filmmaking and the dominant themes and characteristics of the

URIAN/ p.D8

BIENVENIDO Lumbera

MARIO Hernando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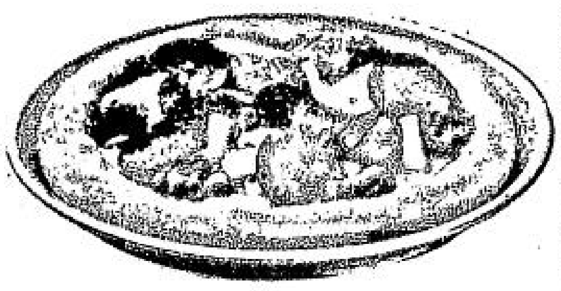

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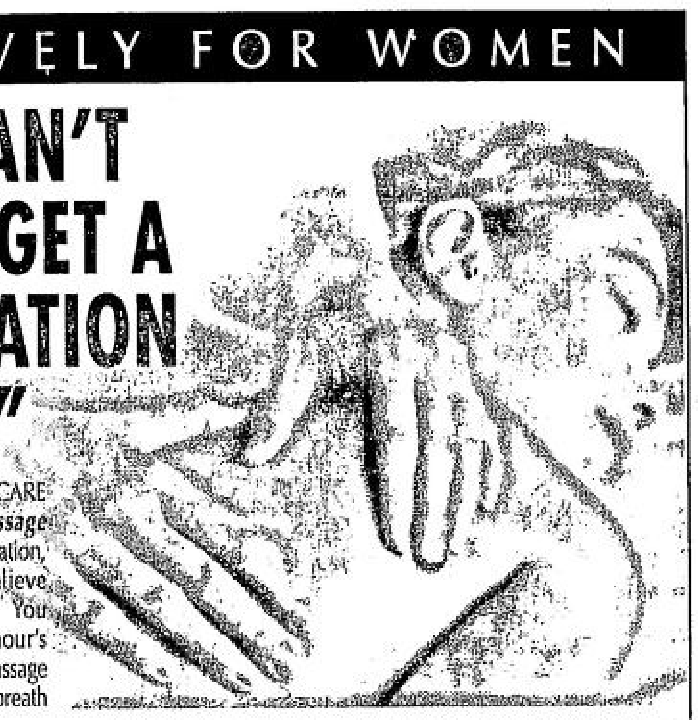

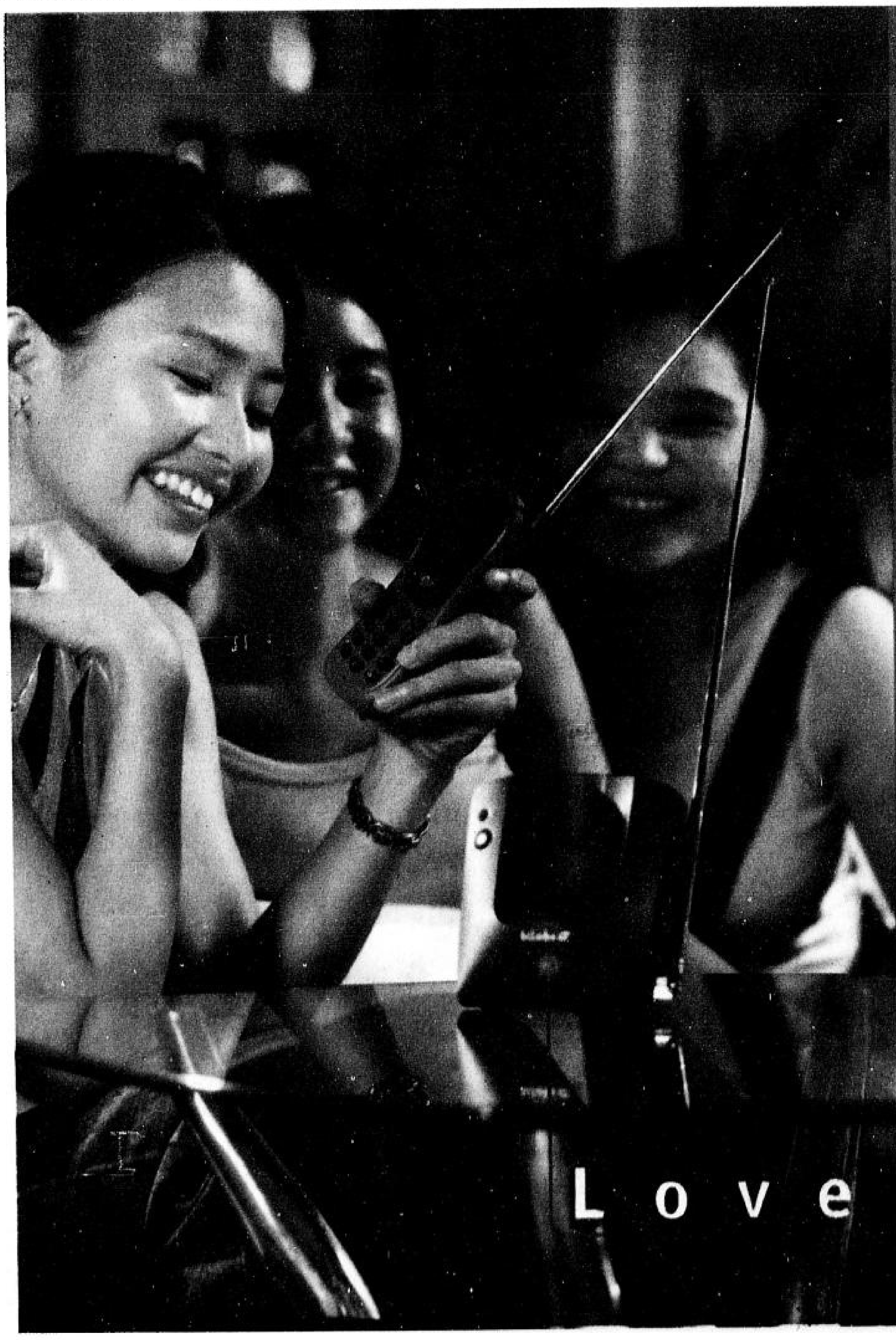
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RAUL LEBAJO

Sweet dreams are made of these

BY JOHNATHAN LIBARIOS RONDINA

ASKED whether he dreams in black and white or in color, surrealist painter Raul Lebajo is likely to answer that he dreams in greens: In the green of the grass that mantles the brown earth, in the green of the sea that adores the blue sky and in a myriad of other greenscapes that pay homage to nature's exuberant hues and textures.

"Still Life and Dreams," Lebajo's latest excursion into imagined ecologies, is an oddity of sorts at the Megamall in that it highlights the fact that the fourth floor's art row is teeming with more life than the third floor's silver screens where, sadly, Philippine cinema continues to map new areas of artistic regression and commercial decay. That Lebajo can mount a show, his 19th in a distinguished career that spans more than 30 years, and sell his paintings at six-figure cost apiece amid economic privation, are testaments both to his tenacity and talent.

"You have to be true to your art," he says with an impish smile that seems misplaced on a bearded face that looks sage-like and older than its actual age of 59 years. "You have to constantly push boundaries to improve yourself."

Last-row student

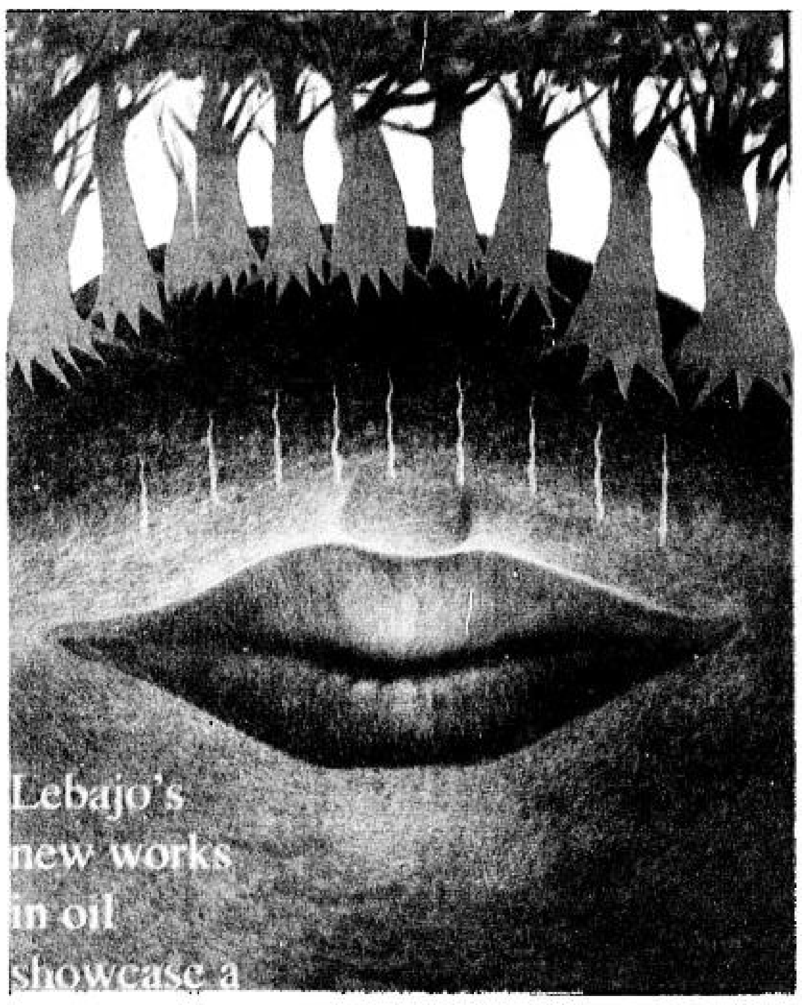
Lebajo began challenging constrictive spaces as a young boy growing up in Tacloban, Southern Leyte. He was, he recalls, a "last-row student," banished to the back seats for being "physically present but mentally absent." But his penalty was his freedom; while his classmates worked on arithmetic, he sketched superheroes and fantasy worlds.

Lebajo's family moved to Manila in the 1950s where he pursued and later dropped out from accountancy studies. He subsequently enrolled at the Philippine Women University's fine arts program, painting alongside Romulo Galicano and Amor Lamarroza. Critical praise came early for the young Lebajo who, in 1967-68, scored back-to-back victories in the National Shell Art Competitions for painting and sculpture.

International acclaim

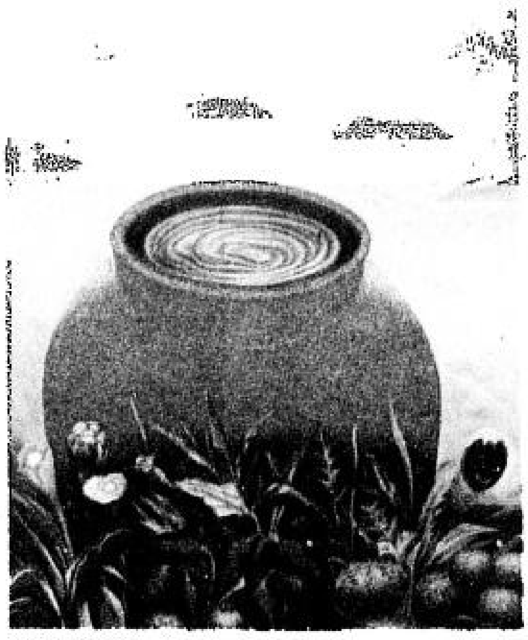
International recognition soon followed. His works have graced the walls of prestigious galleries in West Germany, Switzerland and the United States, where he received the prestigious National Endowment for Arts in 1989, allowing him to stage a show at the Chicago Cultural Center.

He returned to the Philippines in 1993, wizened by his experience in the highly competitive American art scene. He has since then produced a body of work that is refined in technique as it is both cerebral and emotional in substance. Of his introspective abstractions, the Asian Art News wrote thus in 1997: "While a great deal of the most powerful art in the Philippines is about the concerns of the social, political and religious environments in which the artists live, Lebajo's art is fiercely personal, a narrative that springs purely from his imagination reinforced by chance and the everyday world. There is [also] a sense of terrible longing and occasional sadness in his painting."



"FOREST Dream," oil on canvas

Lebajo's new works in oil showcase a markedly hopeful rendition of still lifes, figures, and landscapes in surreal habitats where the grass is always greener



"TADJAO," oil on canvas

Sweet dreams

"Still Life and Dreams," however, is totally devoid of melancholia. If anything, Lebajo's new works in oil, 27 in all, showcase a markedly hopeful rendition of still lifes, figures and landscapes in surreal habitats where the grass is always greener and the sun is ever-resplendent in distinct shades of fiery red orange.

"*Masaya na ako,*" he explains with unabashed honesty. "*Napagtapos ko na sa pag-aaral ang lahat ng mga anak ko.*" By this, of course, Lebajo the father means he can now concentrate on being Lebajo the artist who dreams sweet, organic dreams.

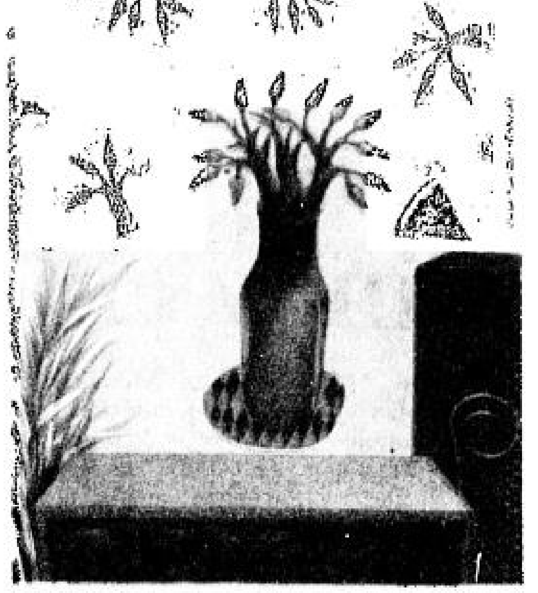
One such dream is "Venus," a work that features a woman in a red bustier amid a radiant solar-hued backdrop. Her black hair covers half of her face, revealing a singular eye that is at once piercing and inviting. Her brown body serves as breeding ground for leaves and small buds that grow wildly from her skin. Lebajo's Venus is, clearly, Persephone in disguise. Halloed with the sun, she is a fitting muse to the artist's previous self-incarnation as "Mr. Boogieman."

"Forest Dream," a wall piece on a broad canvas that Lebajo likens to swimming pools, presents giant lips crowned by a series of trees that direct the viewer's attention from left to right fields, then back again. Simultaneously, ethereal excretions punctuate the distance between forest and mouth. Overall, the effect is that of muted dance, an invitation to waltz with nature's often unpredictable but exciting rhythms.

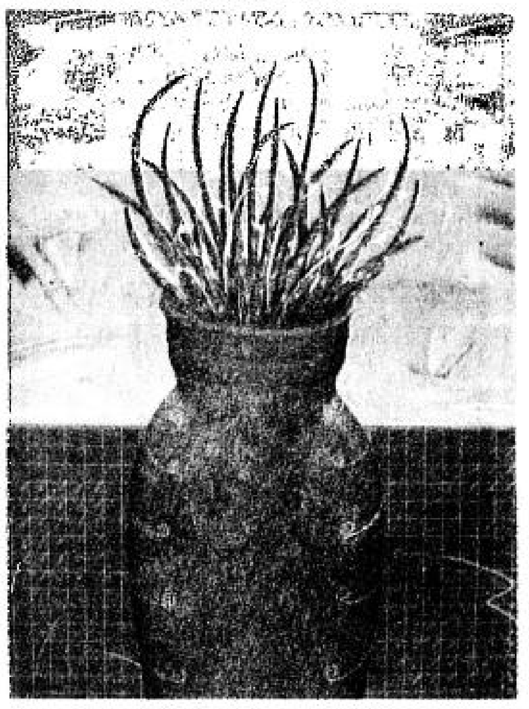
Lebajo, who claims he rarely makes studies and paints intuitively, also ventures into the realm of the whimsical and the outrageous. "Cleopatra's Donut" is an enormous, heart-shaped, airborne pastry that seems to beg the question: Can the queen of Egypt have her donut and eat it, too? "The Grin," a similar piece, which depicts a heart-shaped root crop, suspended in mid-air, taunts the viewer by the sheer incredulity of its dimensions.

Balance and symmetry

The vine that binds Lebajo's latest outing into meta-terrestrial planes, however, seems to be the skill with which he executes symmetrical balance in his compositions to serve the dual purpose of aesthetic and symbolism. Works such as "Tadjao," "Sunrise," "Climbers" and "Greenscape," for example, are all still-life depictions of intricately textured jars from his provincial childhood, repositories of his own personal secrets in the real world; oracles of the earth's bounty in the surreal.



"OCTOBER Tre," oil on canvas



"CLIMBERS," oil on canvas

The jar serves as foreground centerpiece, an idealized icon in Lebajo's subconscious, ornamented with an odd mixture of indigenous flora, occasional fauna, mystic pizzas and other such random elements. The planes, which serve as background, though barren, are lush with promise. All these visual elements, taken as a whole, convey a restful state of peaceful coexistence between organisms, an ecological balance amid the biodiversities of today's modern world. By such masterful stroke, Lebajo's personal inquiries into the mind become universal. One can only hope that it crosses the threshold of surreality into reality.

"Still Life and Dreams" runs until tomorrow, Aug. 7, at the Art Space of SM Megamall, 4/L Building A, Ortigas Complex, Mandaluyong City. Call Galleria Duemila at 633-6687

With uncynical eyes

BY ROWENA C. BURGOS

AS one of the country's most widely published photojournalists, Edgardo S. Santiago has followed the news, and hence the work, to some of the worst places in the Philippines. The poverty in Metro Manila, the numbing misery of calamity victims and the mixture of excitement and danger in covering the eruptions of Mounts Taal and Pinatubo and the Philippine tour of Pope John Paul II—wherever and whatever it is, Santiago has been there and done that.

His achievement is to have produced a body of work that is devoid of the cynicism that pervades much of his profession.

The 66-year-old Santiago has enjoyed the luxury of long-term relationships with different publications. After taking up fine arts at the University of Santo Tomas, he worked as a color technician at Manila Chronicle and Manila Times Publishing Co., a senior staff photographer at the Philippine Daily Express, Expressweek, Evening Express, Pilipino Express and Weekend Magazine and Philippine Tribune and chief photographer of the Philippine Daily Globe.

The catalog of major news in his time was dense with seemingly unprecedented events of great significance; for Santiago, who has been in the field of photography for 44 years now, it had been a wild ride.

Urban reality

In a pocket gallery dedicated solely for black-and-white photography, the Alcove Photo Gallery, Santiago's show, "Images and Reality," forcefully thrusts itself upon the viewer.

The exhibition, which opens today and runs until Aug. 18 at the Filipinas Heritage Library on Makati Avenue, Ayala Triangle, Makati, explores the artist's technique and his treatment of the topography of Metro Manila.

The 21 works on Philippine shanties, a vivid representation of life's ups and downs and a hidden phase in urban areas, are portrayed with the persuasive power of a storyteller.

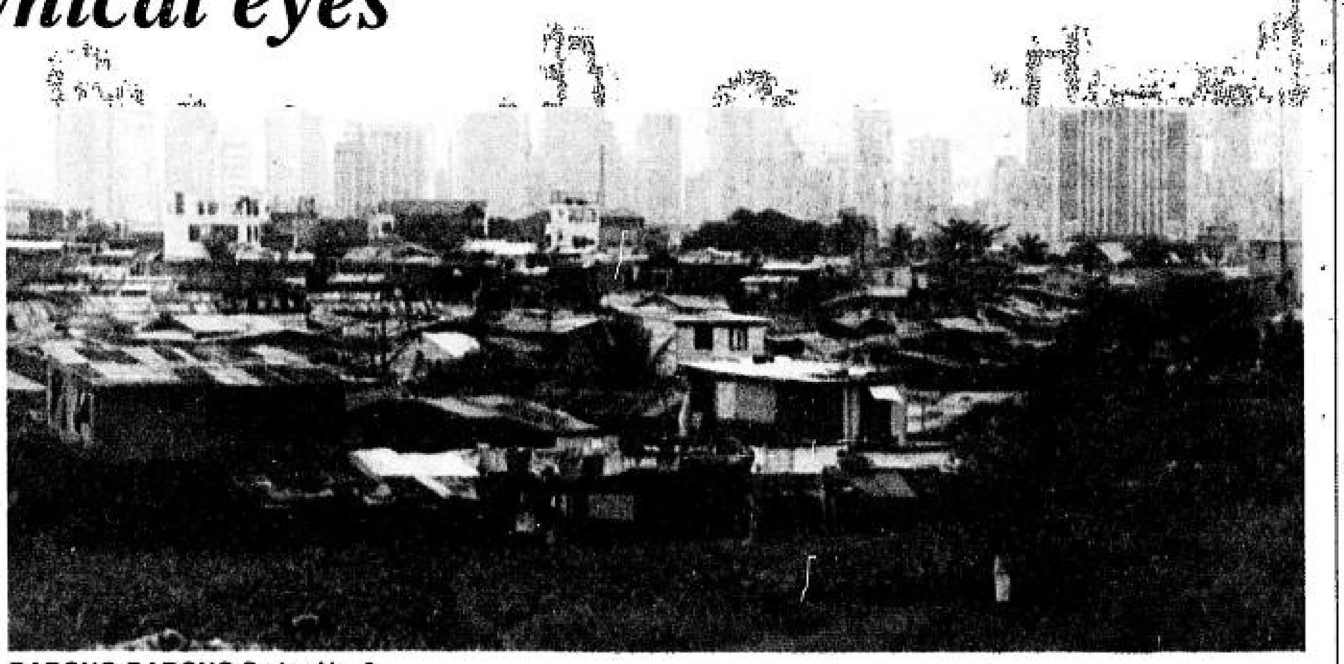
Influenced by his father Manuel, who was a painter, and inspired by such themes as children and nature, Santiago has learned that people pictures, body language and the emotions and planes of the human face can tell a story as profoundly and movingly as any number of spot-news photos.

This crucial interaction with his varied subjects, from prominent personalities to the forgotten and abandoned, has developed into a number of award-winning projects, including the 1969 NPC-Elizalde Photo Contest, the 1978 RSB Photo Contest and the 1993 YKL Cup Photojournalism Award.

The old picture editor's maxim is "Give me the picture I need... and the picture you like." In Santiago's case, this is often, and most gratifyingly, one and the same.

"Images and Reality" is sponsored by Eduviges Huang, chair of the Federation of the Philippine Photographers Foundation, Fuji-YKL Color Laboratories and Gallery Frames.

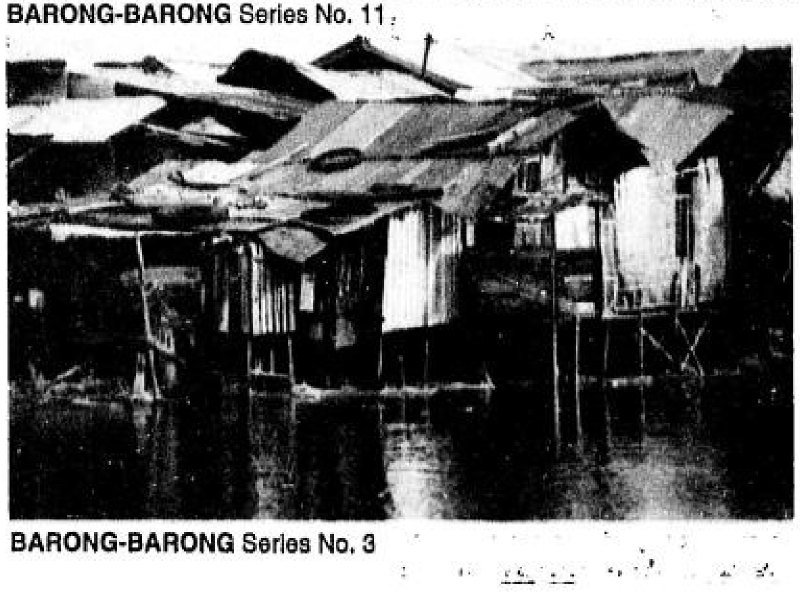
E-mail the author at rburgos@inquirer.com.ph



BARONG-BARONG Series No. 9

BARONG-BARONG Series No. 11

In "Images and Reality," photojournalist Ed Santiago documents the nation's social and economic ills



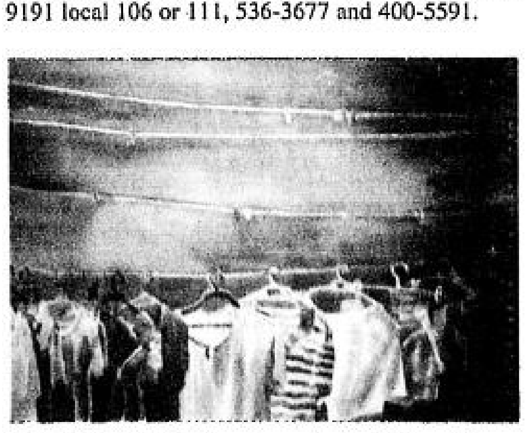
BARONG-BARONG Series No. 3

Fajardo at West Gallery . . .

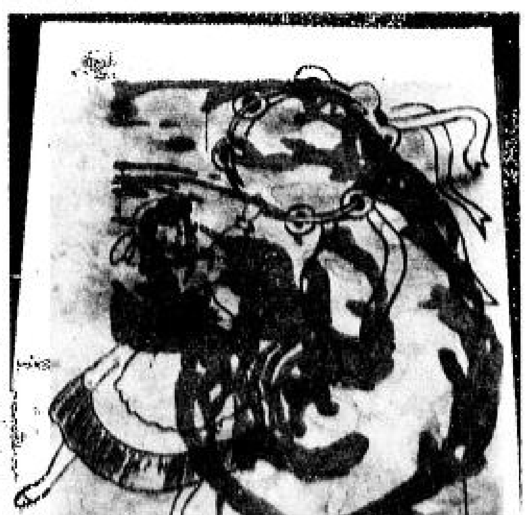
(From page D3)

features the best and the brightest of watercolor painting enthusiasts from across the country. A notable panel of judges will select and award five winners and five runners-up from among the approximately 60 participants. The exhibit will be held at 4/L SM Megamall Art Center, Building A, Mandaluyong City. The exhibit will run from Aug. 10-22. Call 633-8137 to 38.

EXHIBIT/SALE. Manila Sanitarium Foundation Inc. will hold an art exhibit/sale by various artists at the lobby of Manila Sanitarium and Hospital (1975 Donada St., Pasay City), from Aug. 6-7. Call 525-9191 local 106 or 111, 536-3677 and 400-5591.



"CLOTHESLINE," watercolor by Victor Ng at Gallery Genesis



DE LEON AT GALLERIA DUEMILA. Artist R.M. de Leon mounts his 28th one-man exhibit dubbed "Wrong Pictures" until Aug. 19 at the Galleria Duemila, 4/L SM Megamall Building A, Mandaluyong City. Call 831-9990, 833-9815, 634-3261 and 633-6687. Above is "Gypsy Queen," acrylic on paper

Fajardo at West Gallery; Lofranco at Gallery 139; lecture on colonial art at Lopez Museum

VISUAL ARTS

BRENDA Fajardo exhibits her recent collections in "Daloy," on view at the West Gallery, Marisan Center, 48 West Ave., QC. The exhibit will run from Aug.10-24. Call 411-0336/9221.

LOFRANCO AT GALLERY 139. Joseph Lofranco mounts his self-titled show at Gallery 139, 4/L SM Megamall Building A, Edsa, Mandaluyong City.

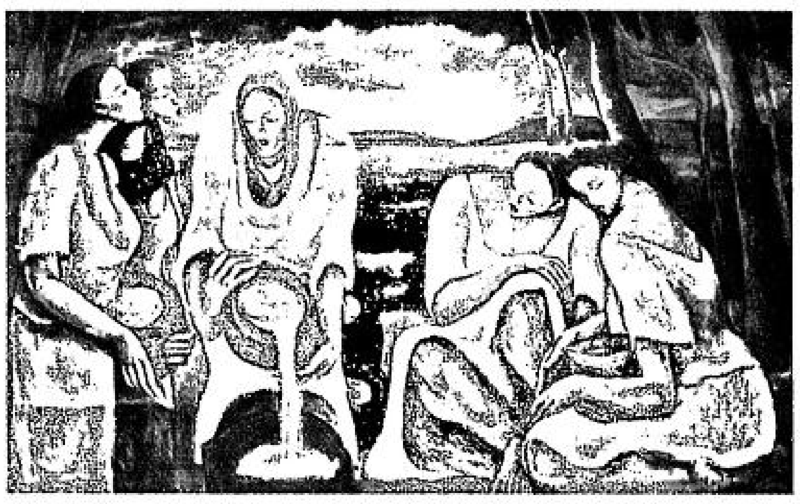
LECTURE AT LOPEZ MUSEUM. Art historian and church art expert Regalado Trota Jose lectures "Colonial Art Treasures," Aug. 7, at the Lopez Museum. The luncheon lecture is at P1, 250. Call 631-2417 or 449-2355.

PIEDRA AT THE CRUCIBLE. Raul Piedra's latest acrylic texturized paintings will be on view at the Crucible Gallery, 4/L SM Megamall, Building A, Edsa Mandaluyong City, from Aug. 7-21. Dubbed "Quintessence," Piedra once again explores different forms using textures. Essential to each piece is the play of colors from soft to solid renditions that encircle his subjects. The exhibit will feature 20 paintings in various sizes. Call 635-6061.

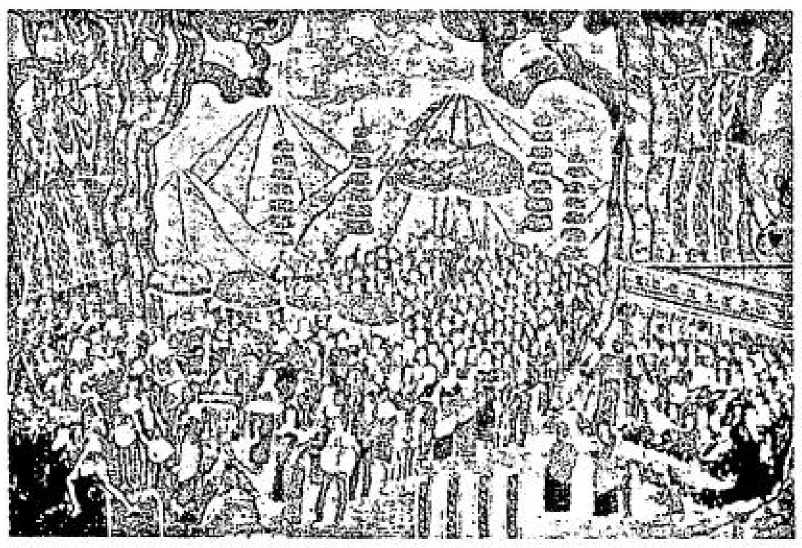
NAVAS AT FINALE. To Singapore-based Filipino artist Elaine Roberto-Navas, the landscape becomes the space on which she bears her soul with force and emotion. Her new series of landscapes comprises her latest show at the Finale Art Gallery, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City. The exhibit will open tomorrow and will run until Aug. 19.

'KULAY SA TUBIG' AT GALLERY GENESIS. The unparalleled watercolor competition in the country, Gallery Genesis, proudly unveils the 2001 Annual Invitational Watercolor Competition and Exhibition, dubbed "18th Kulay sa Tubig." The show

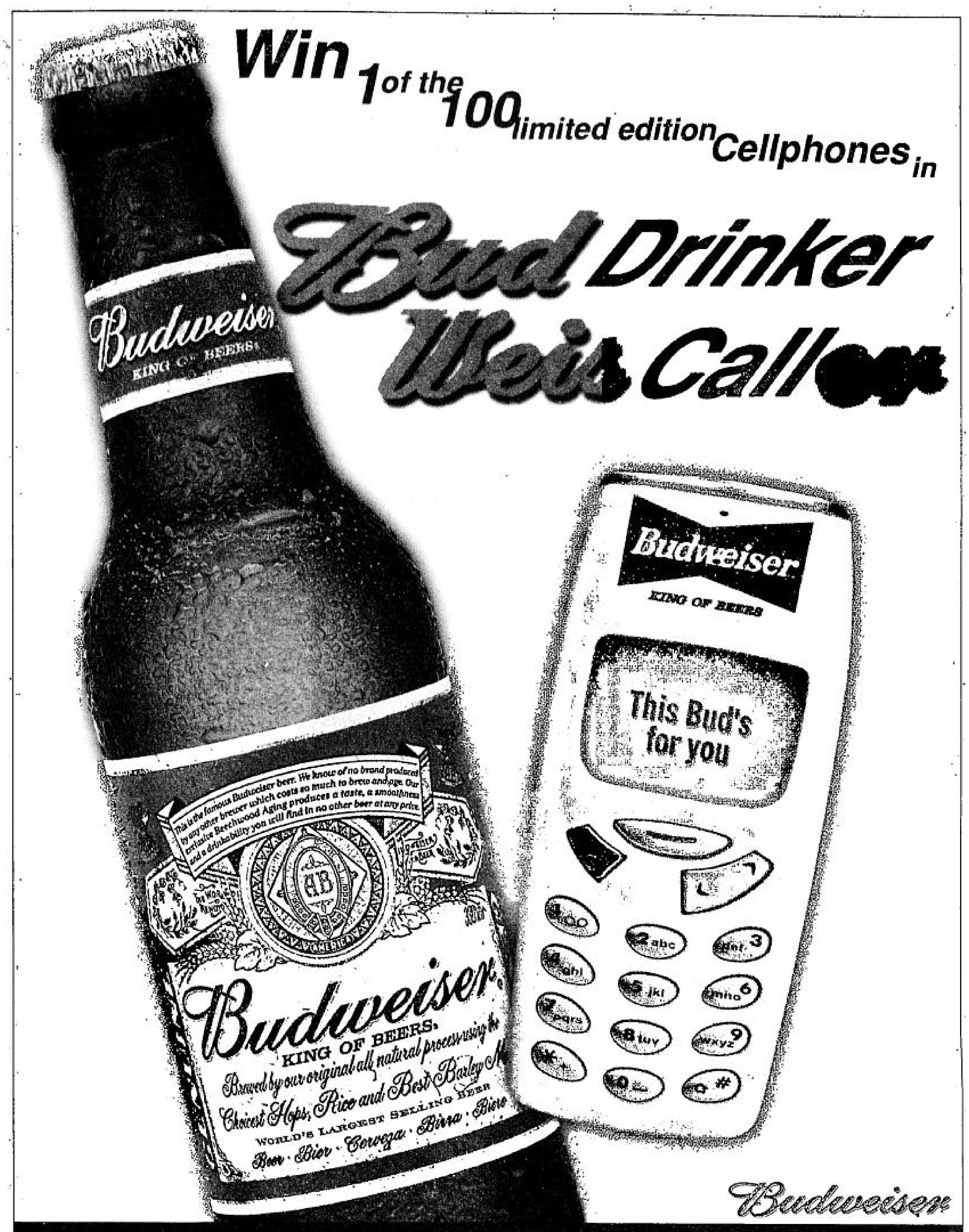
FAJARDO/ p. D2



"**WOMEN** Series" by Velasco is on view at the Glorietta Art Center until Aug. 15.



AHMAD AT GENLUNA GALLERY. Multiawarded Muslim artist Ib'n Saud Salipyasin Ahmad (a.k.a. Saudi Ahmad) opens his solo exhibit in Davao City's Genluna Gallery, 12 General Luna St., Davao City on Aug. 10. The exhibit features 22 Muslim traditional ceremonies and daily rituals inside huts, along coastal areas, inside forests and along riverbanks. The exhibit runs until Aug. 18. Call (082) 226-2104 or 221-0296.



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It's a whole new world for Dominicans in the new century

BY LITO B. ZULUETA

THE NEW Master General with the General Chapter of Dominicans in Providence, Rhode Island, New York. The dalmatian obviously refers to the popular representation of the Dominicans as "Hounds of the Lord."

THE REV. Carlos Azpiroz, O.P., 86th successor to St. Dominic

WHEN Dominicans all over the world celebrate the feast of St. Dominic on Aug. 8, their celebration will be led by a new master general, Fr. Carlos Alfonso Azpiroz Costa, O.P., an Argentinean and only the second non-European to head the 787-year-old order.

Azpiroz was elected during the General Chapter (general assembly) of the Order of Preachers, as the Dominicans are formally known, at Providence College, Providence, Rhode Island, New York. He succeeds Fr. Timothy Radcliffe, O.P., the first Englishman to become master of the Order.

In a loving show of British humor, Radcliffe welcomed Azpiroz's election by alluding to past British-Argentinean hostility over the Falklands. "When I was elected, Damian (Byrne, an Irishman), the previous Master, joked that it was hard for an Irishman to announce the election of an Englishman," Radcliffe said. "This time an Englishman had to announce the election of an Argentinean!"

Age of denial

Azpiroz, 44, takes the reins of one of the Church's oldest and most influential orders at a most auspicious time. "Ours is an age which denies the Incarnation in a multitude of ways, and the consequences of this denial are clear and disturbing," Pope John Paul II told the General Chapter in a letter, as he lamented the growing privatization of belief in God, the "mutual impoverishment" of faith and reason, sexual degradation and "moral confusion."

The Pope said he looks to the Dominicans to "play a vital part in the Church's mission to overturn the old untruths and proclaim the message of Christ effectively at the dawn of the new millennium."

As the new Dominican master general of the new millennium, Azpiroz will oversee a vast order of 6,000 friars spread out in 102 countries. As the 86th successor to St. Dominic, he is also spiritual head of the Dominican Family, which counts 40,000 Dominican contemplative nuns and religious sisters, 75,000 Dominican laymen and nearly a million members of Dominican-sponsored confraternities. Last October, in fact, the Dominican Family held its first world congress at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila.

In the Manila meeting, Radcliffe had expressed his desire to evolve common projects by the Family that would be "multicultural and multisectoral." Although Azpiroz was not in the Manila meeting, consumed as he was by his duties as procurator general of the Dominican curia in Rome, he had optimistic words for the Family after his election. "The [Manila] meeting gave us a sense of celebration, to celebrate our common vocation," he said in an interview. He likened the Family to a symphonic orchestra. "All the different parts need each other," he said. "Truth is a symphony, truth is our music."

How to play the symphony of truth has become more and more challenging for the Order whose motto is "*contemplata aliis tradere*"—contemplating or searching for the truth and sharing the fruits of contemplation.

When they started in the early 13th century, St. Dominic and his band were considered innovative for forging a new spirituality: Living a life of mendicancy (that is, poverty) and marrying it with intense scholarship and fierce apostolate through teaching and preaching. The new spirituality revived the medieval Church, led to the founding of the first universities (Salamanca, one of the first universities in history, continues to be under Dominican management), deposed heresies, and evangelized the New World.

Democracy

The new spirituality also introduced the concept of democracy in an unrepentantly autocratic hierarchy like the Church. Arguably the most important contribution of the Dominicans to the history of mankind is democracy, as it is reflected in its constitution and rules. Democracy partly explains the secret to the Order's unity, longevity and strength. Unique among religious orders, the Order of Preachers has not been affected by disunity that has affected, for example, the Carmelites and the Franciscans.

Azpiroz, in fact, was elected in a General Chapter that has become the model of democracies around the world, including the American constitution. The highest authority in the Dominican Order, the General Chapter is a triennial assembly of friars representing the Order's provinces. It passes key legislation through a bicameral setup that has yielded copycats in the bicameral legislatures of many modern democracies. In the Dominican legislature, the lower chamber is composed of diffinitors and the upper chamber is composed of provincial priors or heads.

Normally there are three General Chapters in a nine-year cycle. The first is the General Chapter of Diffinitors on the third year, followed by the General Chapter of Provincial Priors on the sixth year, and capped by the General Chapter of

IT'S A WHOLE/ p.D5

San Francisco de Dilao Parish in Paco marks 402nd anniversary

PURELY PERSONAL

Josephine Darang

AS San Fernando de Dilao Parish in Paco, Manila celebrates its 402nd year of evangelization, the church emphasizes the role of laymen and women in the work of bringing people closer to God.

There are at least 17 parish organizations that focus on one goal: To teach and encourage people to hold on to their faith and live good Christian lives.

Ursula "Sol" Alturas Yu, president of CWL, is this year's fiesta committee chair. She has gathered all her friends and fellow parishioners to make this a meaningful event. They are Norma Chu, Nene Gonzales, Baby Quintos Uy, Angie de la Cruz, Aida Altamirano, Chelo Alemany, Buddy Mendoza, Jojo Quilantang, pastoral council president; Bert Borja of the Cofradia, Bong Salcedo, lawyer Pete Bautista, Fraxie Fernandez, Vuyo Hernandez and Jun Santioque of the Knights of Columbus.

How the church grew

The first chapel was built in 1599. It was damaged by the Chinese uprising in 1603, but was repaired by the Franciscans. Then, an earthquake damaged it again in 1852. It was again rebuilt until a fire on Feb. 5, 1899 destroyed it.

The present church was built through the help of Manuel Uy and his family. The CICM fathers took over in 1908. They established a parochial school in June 1912. The Paco Parochial School has grown to be the biggest parish school in the world in terms of enrolment. It has 7,000 students in elementary and high school.

In 1984, the parish was turned over to the diocesan clergy and Bishop Teodoro Bacani became its first parish priest. He stayed there for 11 years. When he left, the people cried.

Msgr. Domingo Cirilos Jr. took over and prepared the parish in celebrating the 400 years of evangelization in 1999.

Paco designers help

Fashion designers who have shops in Paco have been asked to help in the celebration. Barge Ramos will do the vestments of St. John and the cape of the parish priest; Maxie Cinco will dress up the Santo Sepulcro; Frederick Peralta, the clothes of the Nuestra Senora de Candelaria; Lyle Inanez, the altar vestments; and Tweet Alturas and Sidney Perez Sio of Guru Productions will do the flower arrangement of the church.

Mutya ng Paco coronation

Ladies in Paco will vie for the title of Mutya ng Paco on Aug. 18 at 7 p.m. at the Cardinal Sin Building auditorium. They are Mila Llorin (CWL); Elvira Arnan (AP); Catalina Yalung (CFC); Doris Suyap (Area); Flor Afable (Cofradia); and Linda Ibarra (Ladies of Charity).

Novenas on Aug. 10-18

A NINE-DAY novena will be held on Aug. 10 at 6:30 p.m. until Aug. 18. Fiesta day on Aug. 19 will be marked by a Mass to be celebrated by Cardinal Sin at 5 p.m. It will be followed by a procession.

It is said that the Santo Sepulcro is miraculous. People who have been granted healing and had their prayers answered will come to the Masses as a way of thanking the Lord.

Lipa retreat

THE ARCHDIOCESE of Lipa will hold a retreat from Aug. 6-10 in Lipa City.

The retreat will include most of the clergy in the South Luzon Tagalog Region (Soltare). There will also be a pastoral consultation. The ecclesiastical province of Lipa covers the Soltare, which includes the Archdiocese of Lipa, the Dioceses of Boac, Lucena and Gumaca, the Prelature of Infanta and the Apostolic Vicariates of Calapan and San Jose (Mindoro).

This First Regional Clergy Retreat and Pastoral Consultation will be hosted by the Archdiocese of Lipa. The plenary sessions will be held at the Carmel Church and the De La Salle-Sentrum. The priests will be housed at the Capuchin Retreat Center, Redemptorist Retreat House, St. Francis Major Seminary and Laforce, all in Lipa City.

Priests who wish to join can call the Archdiocesan Chancery at tel. (043) 756-2572 or fax tel. (043) 76-756-0005.

Priest vestments

FASHION designer Jerry Salazar attended the seminar on liturgical vestments by Dom Martin de Jesus three years ago. Today, Jerry is preparing a book that will show the evolution of liturgical vestments from the Roman empire to the present.

Parishes can also order priest vestments from him by calling him at tel. 826-3396 or cellphone (0917) 730-0064. The label is Ecclesia Manila.

Sta. Rita de Cascia image needed

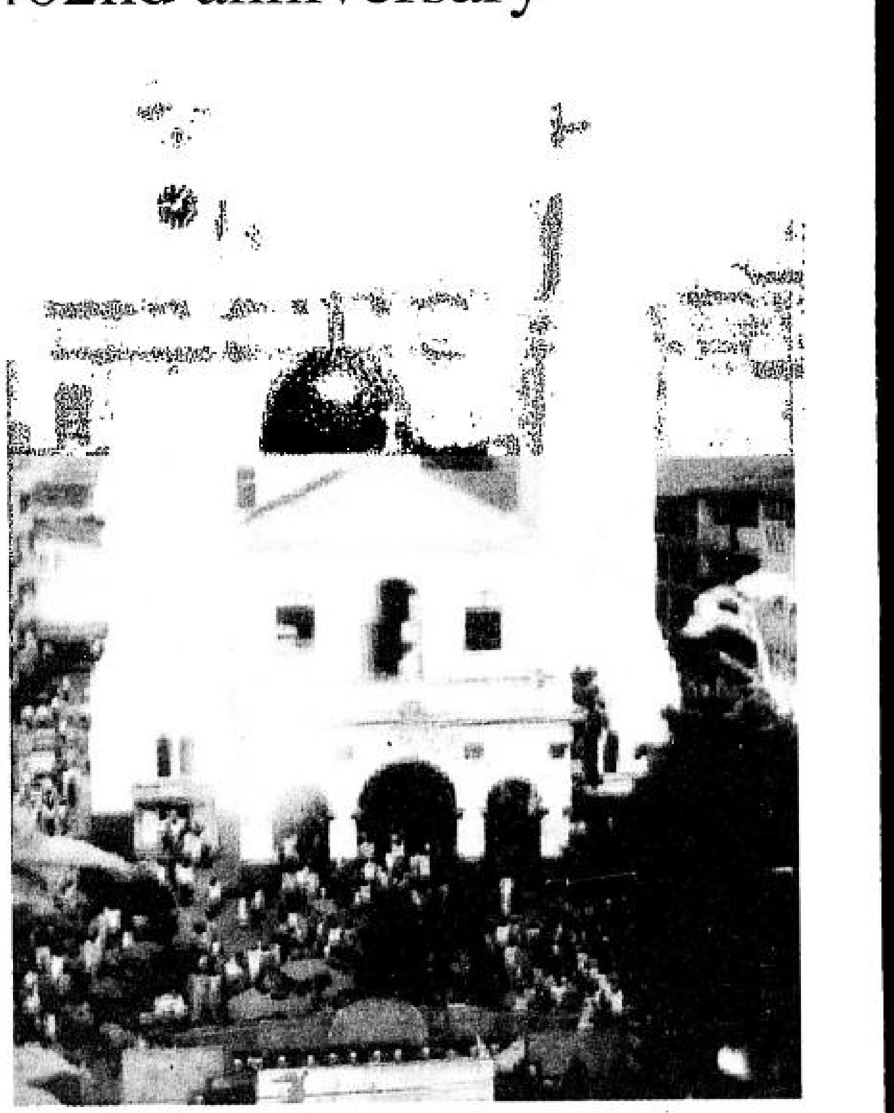
NUNS belonging to the Augustinian Monastery of Sta. Rita de Cascia wrote to ask for a donation of an image of Sta. Rita de Cascia, their patroness. The order is building a monastery and chapel in Cogon, Gubat, Sorsogon. Their charism is contemplation; they live a life centered on prayer.

The monastery and formation house provide seekers a spiritual respite. The order's mother house is in Figline, Valdarno, which is in the south of Florence, Italy.

Those who wish to help build the monastery can write the nuns in their address in Sorsogon, while those who wish to help donate the image can beep me at Easy Call 1411-020543.

PACO parish priest, Msgr. Domingo Cirilos Jr.

URSULA "Sol" Alturas Yu, fiesta chair



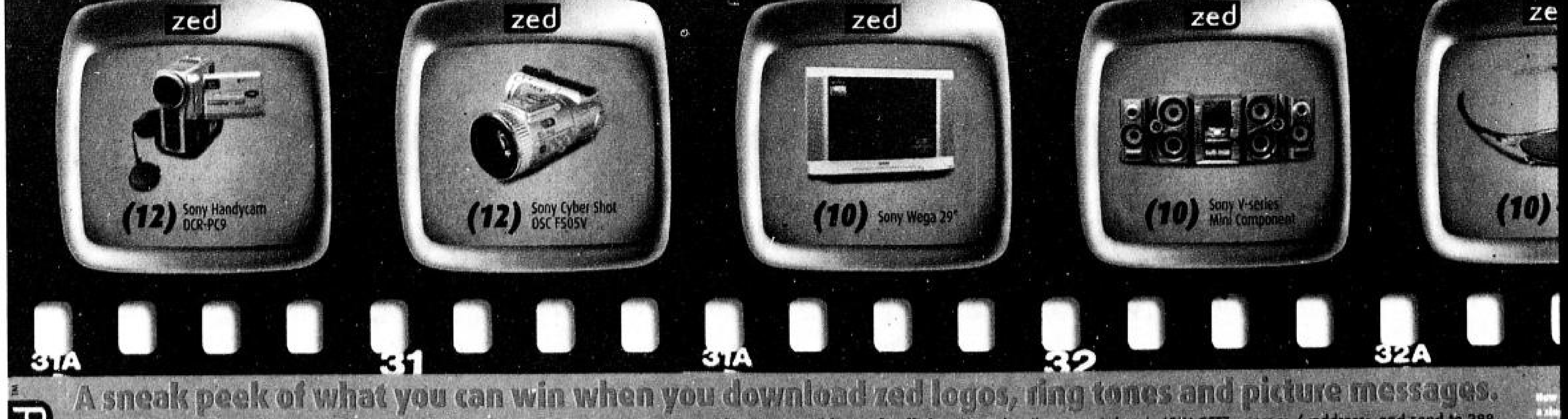
PACO Church is 402 years old.

Marian pilgrimage in Europe

MSGR. Abraham Quig of Malasiqui, Pangasinan will lead pilgrims to Banneux where they will see Our Lady of the Poor Church, and Beauring where they will see the shrine of Our Lady of the Golden Heart.

Included in the tour leaving on Sept. 20 are Lourdes, Fatima and Our Lady of Penafrancia in Salamanca, Spain. Those interested can

SAN FRANCISCO/ p.D7



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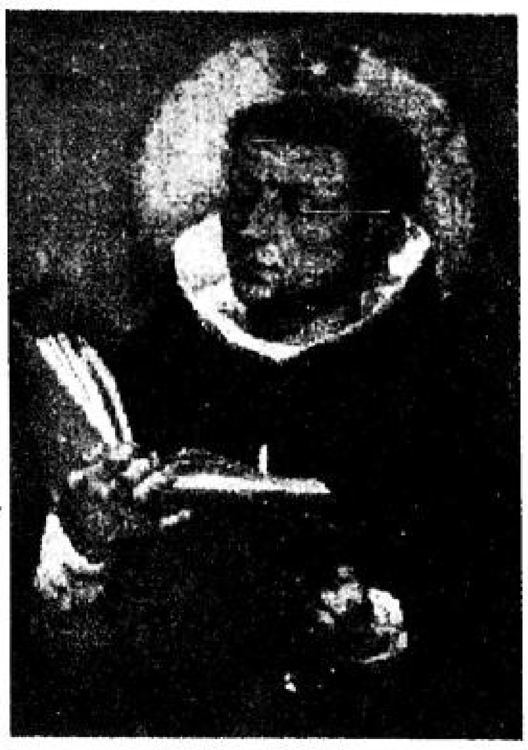
Announcing the Philippine Art Awards 2001

The Philip Morris Group of Companies Philiippine Art Awards 2001, the most prestigious and comprehensive ASEAN-wide art competition celebrates artistic expression, style and sense of adventure on it's eighth year.

Awards Guidelines

The competition is open to all Filipino artists 18 years old and above.
The competition welcomes two-dimensional artworks, not just paintings. Artists may explore any subject or idea.
The competition will look for artworks that are captivating, stimulating and enlightening.
Judging for qualifiers will be based on one's creative exploration of the chosen theme or subject,
freedom and originality, interpretation and the skillful use of a chosen art medium.
On October 1, five Philippine qualifiers will be selected by a distinguished panel of judges who will win P150,000 each and an all expense paid trip to Bali, Indonesia, site of the ASEAN finals in 2002. Together with their counterpart from seven other ASEAN countries, they will vie for the grand prize of US$15,000. Five runners-up prizes of US$5,000 each will also be awarded.
For entry forms and more details, please get in touch with the Philippine Art Awards Secretariat at the Ayala Museum at telephone number 812 - 1191 or fax number 840-1588.
Closing dates for submission of entries :
Davao - Bacolod - Iloilo - September 1 • Cebu - September 3 • Naga - September 8 • Manila - September 13

The Philip Morris Group of Companies Philippine Art Awards 2001 is organized by the Ayala Museum and supported by the National Commission for Culture and Arts, the Cultural Center of the Philippines and the Metropolitan Museum of Manila.



RENAISSANCE REPRESENTATION OF ST. DOMI-NIC. Pope Honorious III called the Saint and his followers "Christ's unconquered athletes" who "valiantly thrust the sword of God against the enemies of the faith."

It's a whole new world for Dominicans . . .

(From page D4)

Diffinitors and Provincial Priors on the ninth year to elect a new master general. A proposal becomes a law and takes effect after getting a favorable vote in the General Chapter. When it gets three successive chapter votes, it becomes part of the Dominican Constitution.

No wonder Azpiroz calls the Dominican Constitution a "spiritual book" and the key spiritual legacy of St. Dominic. "The constitutions give confidence to the brethren to trust in others, because the other men speak a word of light and a word of grace for me," he said. "The constitutions are a cathedral of constitutional law."

A civil and canon lawyer, Azpiroz knows whereof he speaks. Asked what issues he would prioritize, he said he would wait for the acts of the General Chapter. "I don't have any personal agenda because I'm here to hear the brothers and to see how the acts come out," he said.

Radcliffe praised Azpiroz's background in law. "I have been able to discover his deep understanding of Dominican government," the English black friar said. "The purpose of the law for him is not to control us. It is the guarantee of our freedom and dignity. Above all, he sees the Rule and Constitutions of the Order as at the service of our Dominican life and mission."

That does not mean Azpiroz does not have a vision of where the Dominicans are heading. "As I told them [the friars] when they asked me what I thought were two of the most important topics in the Church and the Order today, I told them, first, inter-religious dialogue between the major religions, and second—and this could be the background for a lot of discussion for the next millennium—human rights," he said.

No ceilings

As canon lawyer, Azpiroz also has had a special background in looking at the problems of the Church, especially ministry and vocations. As procurator general, he had to deal with delicate problems of friars seeking dispensation and leaving the priesthood. "This can be an immensely painful task," Radcliffe said. "Yet I have seen how he has exercised it with an immense compassion for every brother, trying to deeply understand the course of events that brought them to this situation. He has the compassion of Dominic."

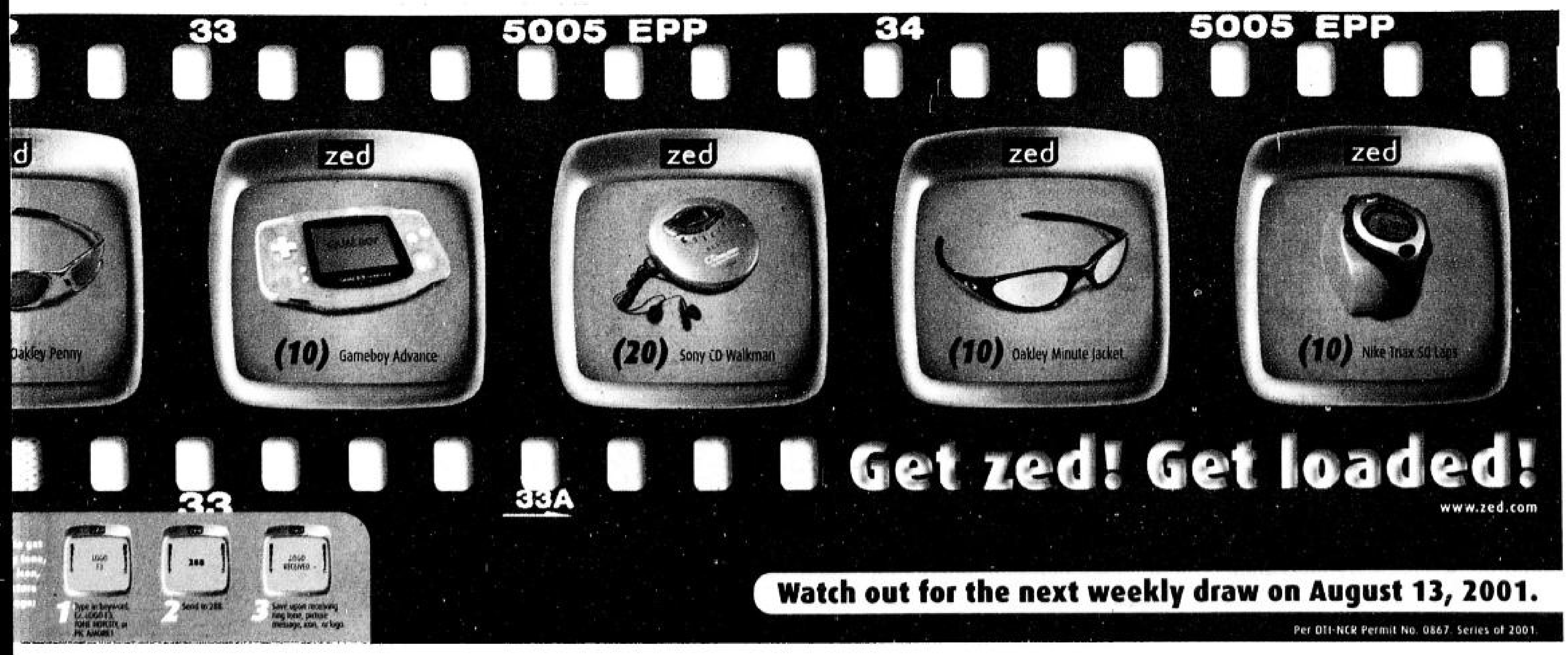
Although Dominican vocations have been arguably steady, more and more friars have come from the New World, such as South America, Africa and Asia. The election of an Argentinean to the top of a very powerful religious order shows this.

Moreover, Azpiroz's election was contested by Dominicans from the Philippines—Fr. Quirico Pedregoza, O.P., the immediate past provincial of the Philippine Province of Dominicans and Fr. Bonifacio Solis, O.P. of the Holy Rosary Province (the Spanish province of Dominicans working in the Philippines). In fact, Pedregoza was later elected as socius or assistant to the master general for the Asia-Pacific, an important position.

Of course, new evangelization in the new century would mean enhanced participation of laymen in the Church, so the Dominicans are seeking an expanded role for the Dominican Family, where third-order members and other laymen are dominant in number.

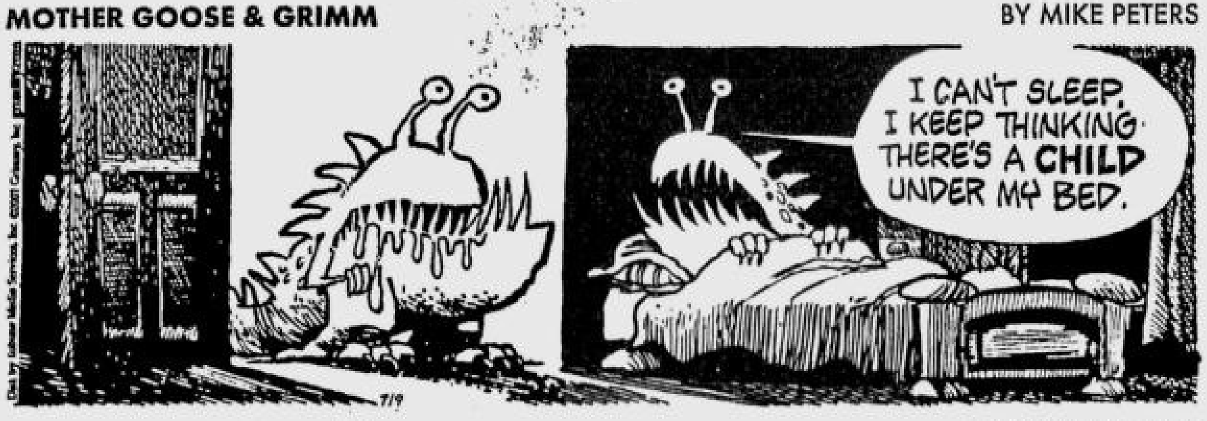
In fact, Azpiroz believes that the consecrated life is for all, clerical, religious or lay. He explained having a vocation is a combination of realism and idealism, which can be fostered by being in touch with the world and with God, a dynamism afforded to everyone, with or without the religious habit.

"For me," Azpiroz said, "consecrated life means having your feet on the ground but no ceiling.' No ceiling means that there are no limits above, but one must be well-grounded in reality." He added that people tend today to be alienated from the world. "[You] should walk great horizons, without any ceiling over your head, without confining walls, but walking ahead with Dominic," he said. "I think many youth should know the great challenge to preach as a Dominican. I am not talking about the friars and sisters only, but also about the laity. They should have great confidence. This is my personal idea."

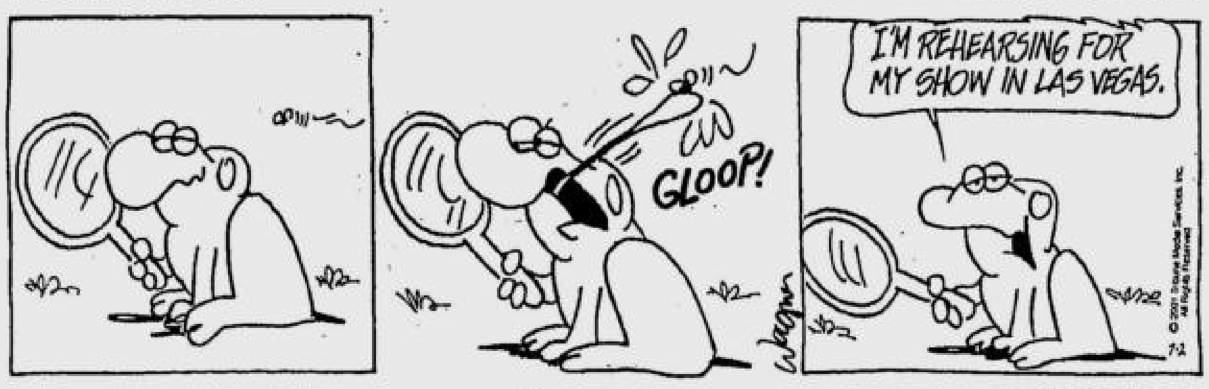


Watch out for the next weekly draw on August 13, 2001.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0867. Series of 2001.

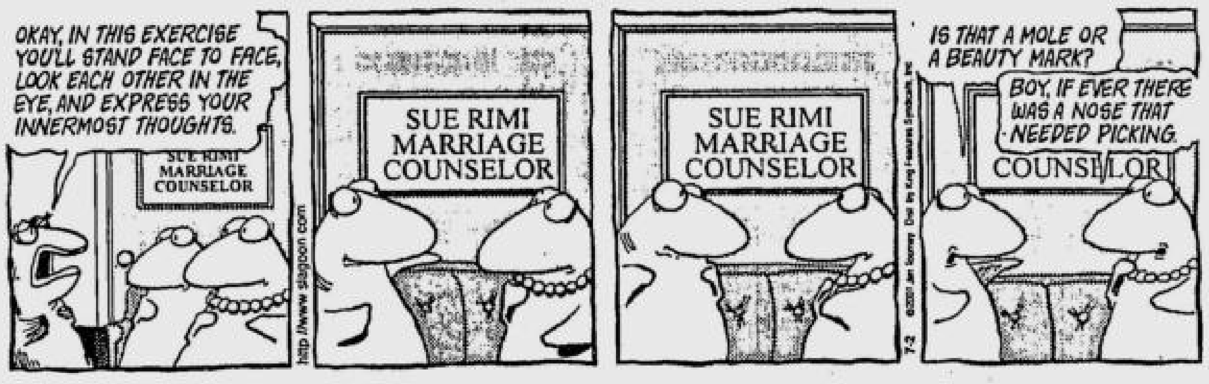
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM BY MIKE PETERS


I CAN'T SLEEP. I KEEP THINKING THERE'S A CHILD UNDER MY BED.
7/19

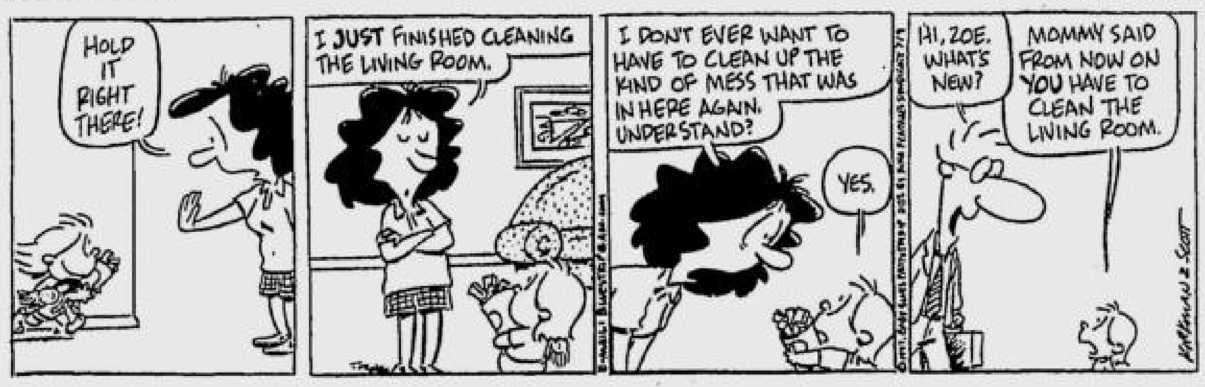
ANIMAL CRACKER BY FRED WAGNER


AAW~
GLOOP!
I'M REHEARSING FOR MY SHOW IN LAS VEGAS.
Wagner
7-2

SHERMAN'S LAGOON BY JIM TOOMEY


OKAY, IN THIS EXERCISE YOU'LL STAND FACE TO FACE, LOOK EACH OTHER IN THE EYE, AND EXPRESS YOUR INNERMOST THOUGHTS.
SUE RIMI MARRIAGE COUNSELOR
http://www.slagoon.com
SUE RIMI MARRIAGE COUNSELOR
SUE RIMI MARRIAGE COUNSELOR
IS THAT A MOLE OR A BEAUTY MARK?
BOY, IF EVER THERE WAS A NOSE THAT NEEDED PICKING.
COUNSELOR
7-2

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


HOLD IT RIGHT THERE!
I JUST FINISHED CLEANING THE LIVING ROOM.
I DON'T EVER WANT TO HAVE TO CLEAN UP THE KIND OF MESS THAT WAS IN HERE AGAIN. UNDERSTAND?
YES.
HI, ZOE. WHAT'S NEW?
MOMMY SAID FROM NOW ON YOU HAVE TO CLEAN THE LIVING ROOM.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Andy Warhol, Lucille Ball, Stepfanie Kramer, Geri Halliwell, Louise Sorel, Michele Yeoh, David Robinson

Happy Birthday: Stop procrastinating and move forward. Sort out your past and put yourself in a position to take advantage of all the opportunities heading your way. You have added discipline and some great ideas, but if you are lazy or expect others to do the work, it's likely that you'll settle for second best. Your numbers: 7, 12, 18, 19, 23, 31

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Don't get into conflicts with those who are in a position to ruin your reputation. Listen and be diplomatic in your approach to solving existing problems.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Romance will unfold if you get out and mingle. Your empathetic nature and ability to see both sides of an issue will enable you to make the necessary changes to turn things around for a close friend.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't push your luck with those you live with. The changes you're making will be upsetting for others. You can prosper if you put your money into your property.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Do a little investigating to obtain more information about interesting educational pursuits. You need to enforce a daily routine to get back on track.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Money deals are present, but do not overextend yourself in becoming involved. If you don't have the cash lying around, then don't commit. The financial stress won't be worth it.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Social events will lead to potential romantic connections. Don't jump too quickly; take your time. If they really care about you, they won't rush you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Concentrate on your job. Your emotional life may be up in the air if your mate has been going through a change of heart. Be understanding, but don't neglect your own needs.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): It's time to concentrate on yourself: Follow through on dreams and look into activities that have always interested you. Let your creative juices flow. Children will make a difference to your outlook.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You will learn much more if you listen to others. An older relative may require help, but don't let it become a burden.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Be careful while driving. Your mind will be on everything except what it's supposed to be on. Preoccupation will lead to mishaps and misunderstandings as well.

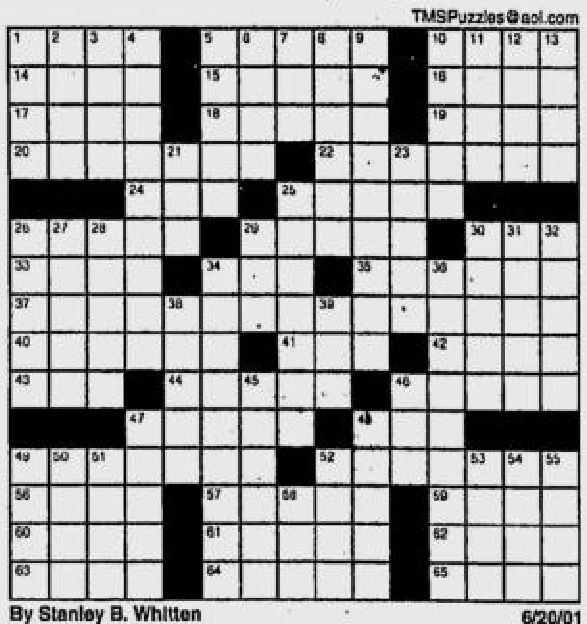
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You will face financial limitations if you haven't been putting money aside for unforeseen expenses. You must put in some extra work if you want to get out of debt.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Emotional depression is likely if you're not happy with yourself. Stop pouting and do something about your image.

Birthday Baby: You may be inquisitive, bright, outspoken and dramatic, but you're also sensitive and can even be shy concerning personal matters. You are loving, caring and full of good intentions.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Stanley B. Whitten
Highwood, IL

6/20/01

ACROSS
1 Java's neighbor
5 Kind of maid?
10 Cabbage dish
14 Lena or Ken
15 Early-stage seed
16 Evergreen
17 Pindar's poems
18 Bridge action
19 Jot
20 Computer adjunct
22 Computer adjunct
24 __ sequitur
25 Ladd classic
26 Explorer Polo
29 Stubble
30 Compass pt.
33 Irish Rose's love
34 Bask
35 Rang
37 Computers' innards
40 Stick
41 Stoolie
42 Possess
43 Visualize
44 Of primary importance
46 Discussion group
47 Northern India monotheists
48 "Mr. __"
49 Computer adjunct
52 Computer adjunct
56 Conceal
57 Poet Conrad
59 Percussion instrument
60 Actress Raines
61 Pelts
62 Greek harp
63 Garden invader
64 Gossipy woman
65 Birth a lamb

DOWN
1 Floating barrier
2 "God's Little Acre" co-star Ray
3 Property claim
4 Hypocritical
5 Idiot
6 Always
7 Vat
8 Inventor Gray
9 Cincinnati rug?
10 Backbone
11 Pride member
12 Feed the kitty
13 Put on
21 Excessively
23 Chilean range
25 Guadalajara women
26 Ladies of the houses
27 Put up with
28 Nouveau __
29 Prickly husk
30 "Six O'Clock" painter John
31 Wait on
32 One Ford
34 Prohibition tavern
36 With embarrassment
38 Path of Discovery
39 Coolidge's nickname
45 Bird of prey
46 D.C. old-timer
47 Slammin' Sammy
48 High IQ group
49 Close-call comment
50 Get under one's skin
51 Loafing
52 Campers' shelter
53 Ballplayer Jeff
54 Emanation
55 Marvel superhero group
58 Relatives

SATURDAY PUZZLE ANSWER

S	T	O	P		S	P	L	A	T		D	A	F	T
P	O	U	R		M	O	U	S	E		E	I	R	E
A	R	T	Y		I	N	S	H	A	M	B	L	E	S
T	O	O		A	R	C	H		C	O	A	S	T	S
		F	L	U	K	E		B	A	S	S			
S	T	O	O	G	E		V	E	R	T	E	B	R	A
T	A	R	T		D	R	A	F	T		D	R	A	G
E	N	D				A	L	I				O	N	E
A	G	E	E		D	I	E	T	S		A	K	I	N
M	O	R	A	L	I	S	T		N	E	W	E	S	T
			R	O	S	E		G	O	R	E	N		
C	A	S	T	R	O		B	E	R	G		D	O	E
O	N	T	H	E	B	L	I	N	K		Y	O	G	A
E	T	A	L		E	E	R	I	E		A	W	L	S
D	E	N	Y		Y	O	D	E	L		K	N	E	E

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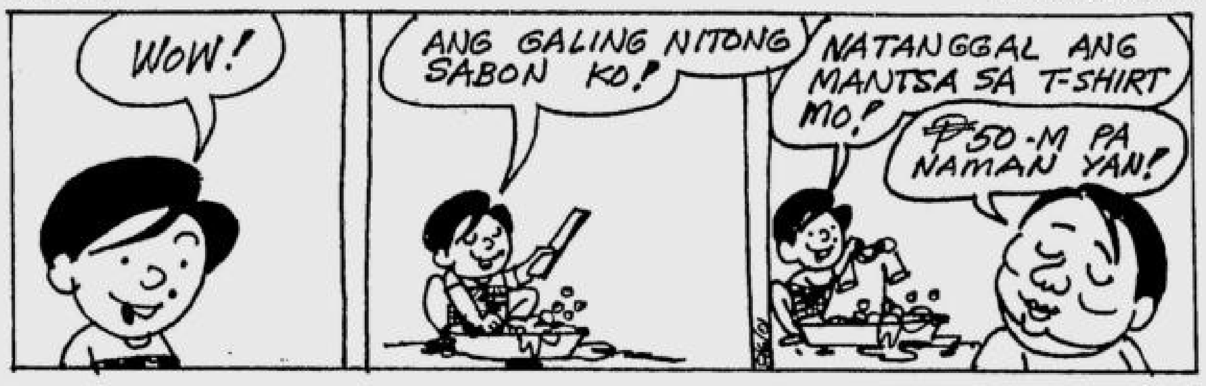
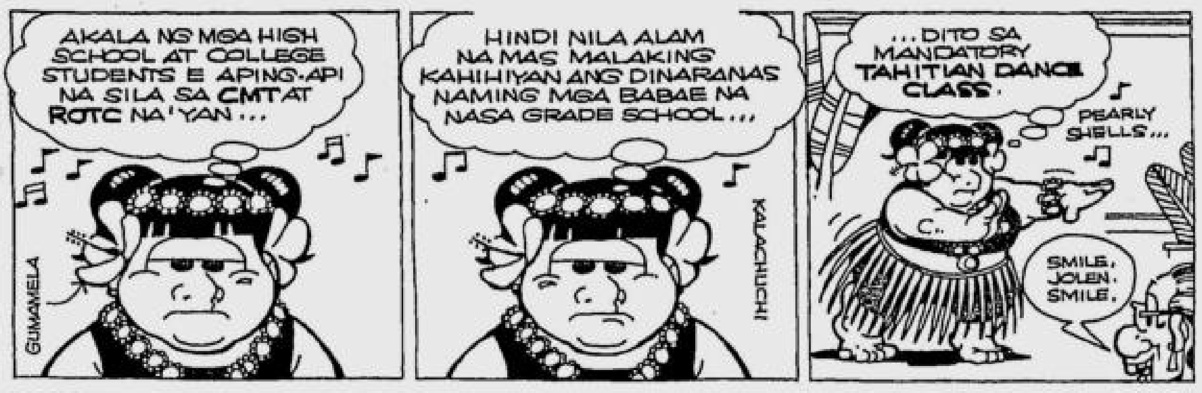
6/20/01

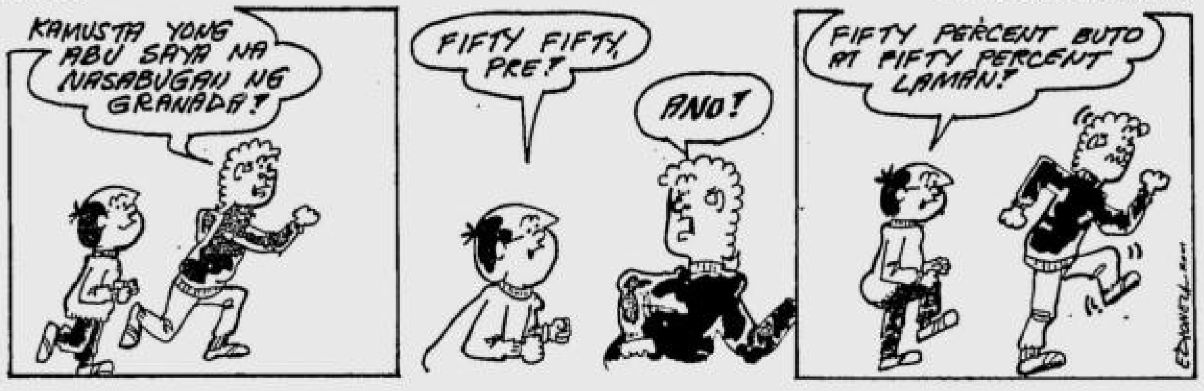
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


WOW!
ANG GALING NITONG SABON KO!
NATANGGAL ANG MANTSA SA T-SHIRT MO!
₱50-M PA NAMAN YAN!

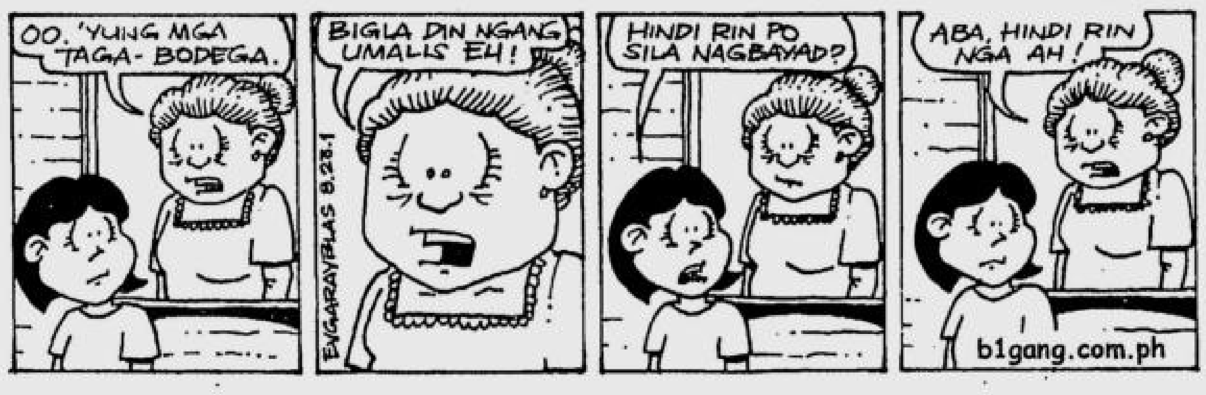
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


AKALA NG MGA HIGH SCHOOL AT COLLEGE STUDENTS E APING-API NA SILA SA CMT AT ROTC NA'YAN...
GUMAMELA
HINDI NILA ALAM NA MAS MALAKING KAHIHIYAN ANG DINARANAS NAMING MGA BABAE NA NASA GRADE SCHOOL...
KALACHUCHI
...DITO SA MANDATORY TAHITIAN DANCE CLASS.
PEARLY SHELLS...
SMILE, JOLEN. SMILE.

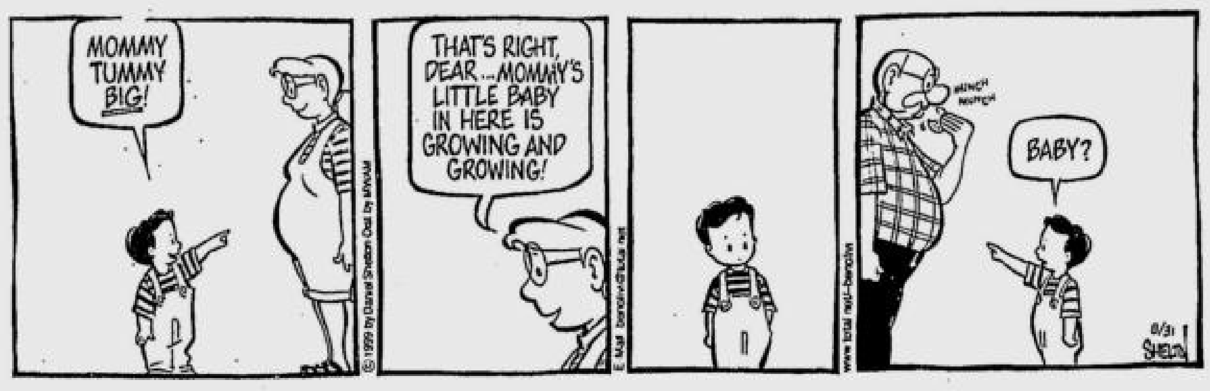
SIMO BY EDGAR DIONELA


KAMUSTA YONG ABU SAYA NA NASABUGAN NG GRANADA?
FIFTY FIFTY, PRE?
ANO?
FIFTY PERCENT BUTO AT FIFTY PERCENT LAMAN!
EDIONELA

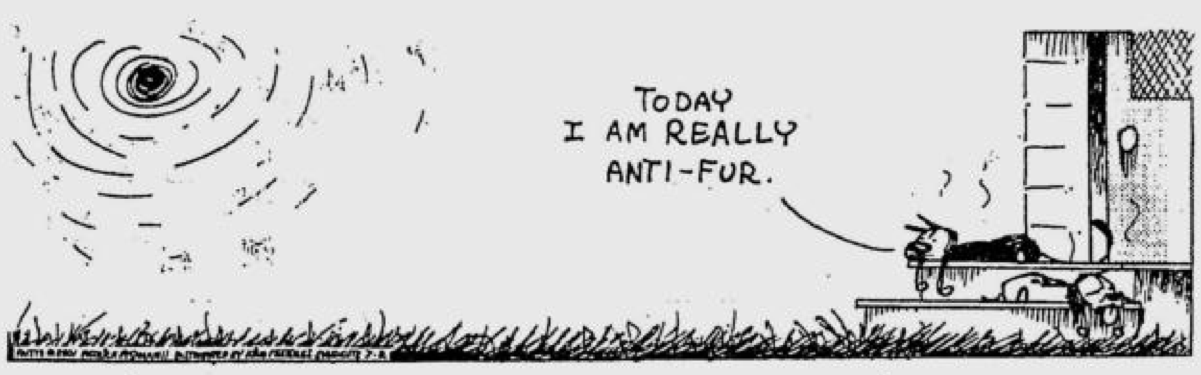
B1 GANG BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


OO, 'YUNG MGA TAGA-BODEGA.
BIGLA DIN NGANG UMALIS EH!
EVGARAYBLAS 8.28.1
HINDI RIN PO SILA NAGBAYAD?
ABA, HINDI RIN NGA AH!
b1gang.com.ph

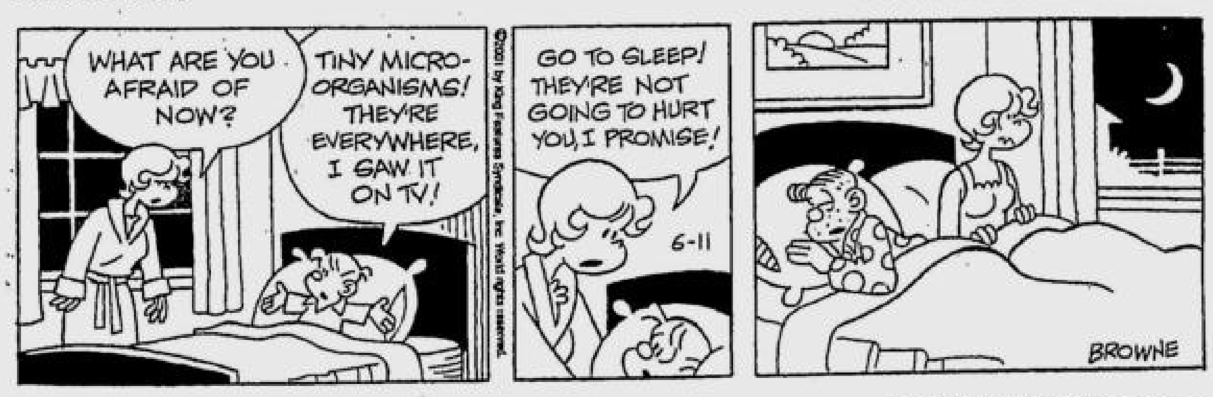
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


MOMMY TUMMY BIG!
THAT'S RIGHT, DEAR...MOMMY'S LITTLE BABY IN HERE IS GROWING AND GROWING!
MUNCH MUNCH
BABY?
8/31
SHELTON

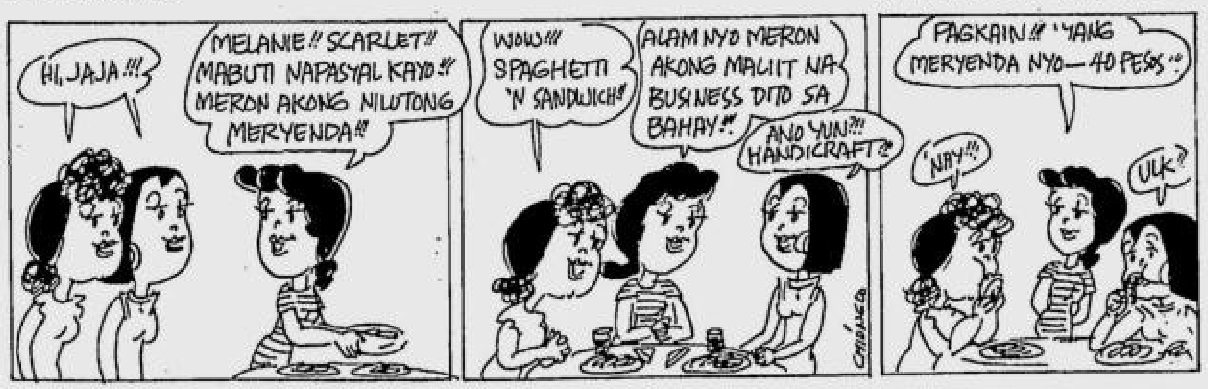
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


TODAY I AM REALLY ANTI-FUR.

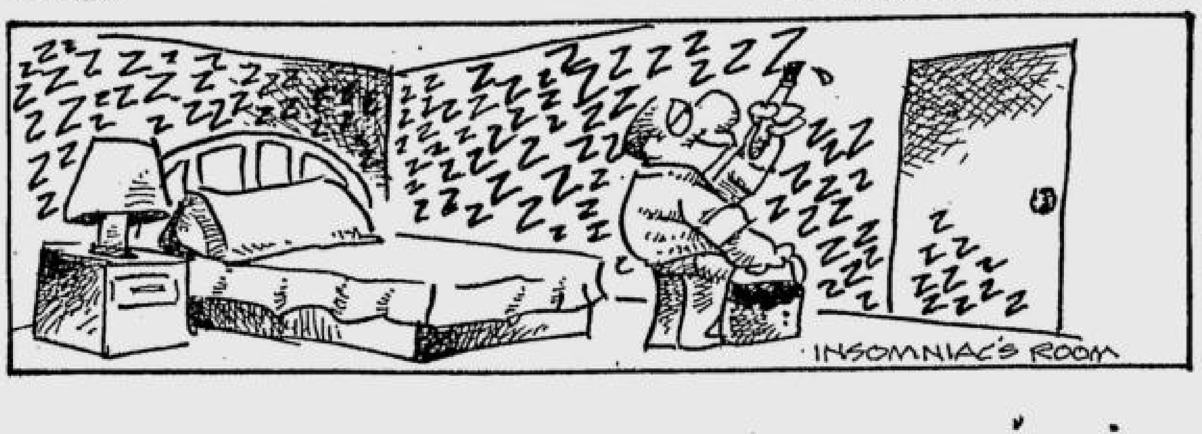
HI AND LOIS BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF NOW?
TINY MICRO-ORGANISMS! THEY'RE EVERYWHERE, I SAW IT ON TV!
GO TO SLEEP! THEY'RE NOT GOING TO HURT YOU, I PROMISE!
6-11
BROWNE

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


HI, JAJA!!!
MELANIE!! SCARLET!! MABUTI NAPASYAL KAYO!! MERON AKONG NILUTONG MERYENDA!!
WOW!!! SPAGHETTI 'N SANDWICH!
ALAM NYO MERON AKONG MALIIT NA BUSINESS DITO SA BAHAY!!
ANO YUN?! HANDICRAFT?
PAGKAIN!! "YANG MERYENDA NYO—40 PESOS!"
'NAY!!
ULK?

TULDOK BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


INSOMNIAC'S ROOM

Getting to know the Moro and his 'bangsa'

Bangsamoro Society and Culture
By Jamail A. Kamlian
Iligan Center for Peace Education & Research
MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology, [1999] 2001, 67 pages

BY CHRISTINE GODINEZ-ORTEGA

REVIEW

IN THIS country where regionalistic and nationalistic feelings seem to dimmer like the rise and fall of tides that buoy the islands we inhabit, objectivity can prove difficult when discussing cultures or religions.

In spite of the recent forging of a peace agreement between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in Libya, skepticism remains on whether Mindanao will attain genuine peace. This is because of the Moro's quest for self-determination that can further change our concept of nationhood; given the country's as well as Mindanao's geographic [and demographic] make-up.

Jamail Kamlian's first book, "Bangsamoro Society and Culture," answers some of your questions about the Moro and his bangsa from a Moro scholar's point of view. It presents his concerns and his realities in a post-post colonial era. It has three parts.

The first two explore the forging of Mindanao's tri-people community, the emergence of the Bangsamoro identity, the Moro National Liberation Front's (MNLF), the history of the Organization of Islamic Countries' (OIC) involvement in the peace process in Mindanao and how it pressured the Marcos government to deal with the Moro people's problems. It also discusses the presence of MNLF bases in Malaysia during Nur Misuari's exile and the landing of firearms in Mindanao from Middle Eastern countries via Malaysia.

Glimpses

The last part of the book gives us glimpses of Tausug society and culture, which should be expanded, illustrated and published separately. The separate publication may add data to other scholars' works like Keiffer's, Abubakar's, Majul's, De la Costa's and Tan's.

Significant parts of Kamlian's book are the inter-ethnic chauvinism of the Moro groups that prevents their true unity and the national government's "divide and rule tactics," resulting in an enduring antagonism between the Moros and the Christian majority. The book also traces the founding of the MNLF and its splinter groups, the MNLF-Reformists and the MILF.

What proves intriguing to the non-Moro reader is that this inter-ethnic chauvinism, which Kamlian calls "two levels of contradictions," was manifested in the breakup of the MNLF and the MILF. This is also manifested in nepotism, in which relatives are appointed to offices where clan members happen to be heads. It also shows in revolutionary forces in which membership is governed along lines of consanguinity and ethnicity that, in Kamlian's words, "renders us, Moro people, most vulnerable to divide and rule tactics and splittism."

Another interesting discussion is the Moro's personalistic dealings with people and his blind loyalty to his bangsa, revealing his feudalistic society. Kamlian believes that unless the Moro is able to transcend "bangsa interests," unity and the true Islamic values of social justice, equality and democracy will remain elusive.

Bangsamoro
Society and Culture
A Book of Readings on Peace and Development in Southern Philippines
Jamail A. Kamlian

Sympathies

The reader can see where Kamlian's sympathies lie, especially in the distinctions he makes between the Christian and/or Bisaya and the Bangsamoro. It also shows in the context in which he uses the word "victory" to mean self-determination, urging the reader to reflect on the critic Edward W. Said's idea that "all human knowledge" may be viewed only through the individual's political, cultural and ideological framework.

In the light of the second Tripoli peace agreement, time and circumstance will tell whether the Moro's quest for self-determination will be realized given the complexity of the problems faced by the various Moro groups in their relationships with the Lumads and the Christian majority. For the moment, Kamlian realizes that a coexistence between the Moros and non-Moros is the better option.

This history professor from Parang, Sulu, who has had a 20-year experience in the teaching of the "History of the Muslim Filipinos and the Lumad Communities," a required course in the Mindanao State University System (MSUS) since 1975, proposes "alternative education" as a basic course of action toward a "culture of peace" in Mindanao.

But this "alternative education," and most of Kamlian's other proposals on conflict resolutions, are not new, considering the tons of material available in the long history of conflicts among peoples in the world.

Still, Kamlian's revaluation of the Moro's historical and social experiences could contribute to the efforts by Mindanaoans to live harmoniously with one another.

San Francisco de Dilao Parish in Paco . . .

(From page D4)

call Economy Travel at tel. 302-2519 or 526-4497. Ask for Flor, Shirley or Jun.

Tesoro donation

THE FAMILY of the late Dona Salud Tesoro recently donated the vestments of the miraculous Infant Jesus of Prague in the Czech Republic, according to Alice Tesoro-Guerrero.

I was blessed to see the image during a pilgrimage in October 1995 when I went with the Congregacion del Santissimo Nombre del Nino Jesus. I remember kneeling there and looking at the Infant's beautiful face, praying hard for healing and good health. He granted my prayer.

Blessed Andre's 156th birth anniversary

THE ARCHDIOCESE of Monteral and devotees of Blessed Andre will mark the 156th birth anniversary of the saint on Aug. 9. Bro. Andre who was baptized Alfred Bessette was born on Aug. 9, 1845.

Blessed Andre built the St. Joseph Oratory in Montreal, Canada. It began as a small chapel in 1904 but it grew into the largest shrine of St. Joseph all over the world.

St. Joseph national shrine to be blessed

THE ST. Joseph Parish in Mandaue, Cebu is the national shrine of St. Joseph. The original image enthroned on the right altar upon entering the church is the oldest image of the saint in the Philippines as it was brought by the Jesuits in the 17th century.

Bishop Antonio Ranola, the parish priest, says that the blessing of the shrine will take place on Aug. 8 with a concelebrated Mass by Cardinal Vidal, bishops and priests at 4:30 p.m.

Twenty-peso stamps needed

READERS who are asking for free novenas to St. Joseph, the Poor Souls, Our Lady of Ubanon and the Holy Cloak novena are advised to enclose a long self-addressed envelope with P20 stamps for easier mailing. Some of the prayers are thick.

Deepak Hardikar holding seminar

THE WORLD-RENOWNED Usui Reiki Master Deepak Hardikar will hold a seminar on healing relationships and healing through balancing on Aug. 27 to Sept. 4. For details, please call Raju Uttamchandani tel. 525-3904 or e-mail Inge at ihbgrmlaskyinet.net

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7 days/6 nights cruise for two (2)
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Hong Kong
Two (2) Round Trip Tickets

Bangkok, Thailand
Two (2) Round Trip Tickets

Overnight Cruise for two (2)
to either Cebu, Bacolod, Cagayan or Iloilo

PLUS!!! SURE WIN INSTANT LUCKY DIP

*Raffle tickets can be claimed upon presentation of an official receipt from any of our restaurants during the promo period.
Deadline of submission of entries: August 31, 2001, 12:00 m.n.
Raffle draw: September 3, 2001 at 3:00 p.m. in the hotel
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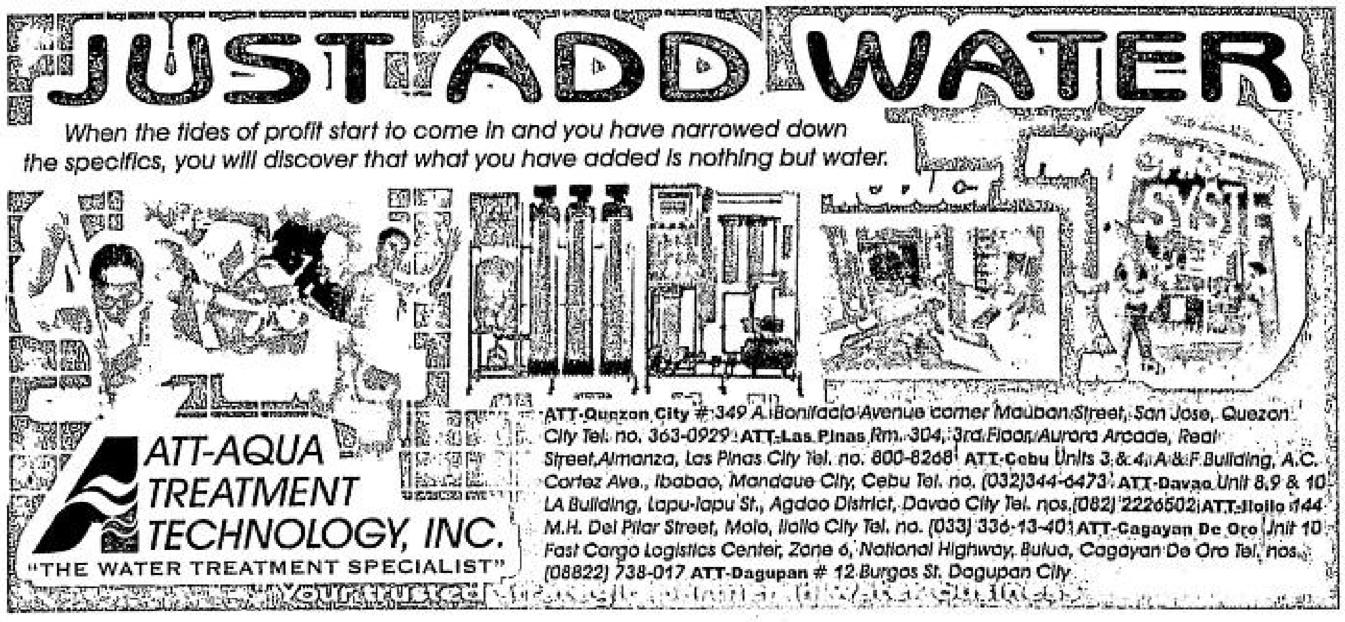
News that makes a difference

RN43835

‘Urian Anthology’ celebrates Pinoy cinema of the ’80s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(From page D1)

cinema in the 1980s. The articles focus on problems hounding the industry such as lack of government support, profit-obsessed producers, uncritical audiences, arbitrary and unenlightened censorship, high costs and slavish imitation of Hollywood movies. They also discuss the important industry developments of that era such as the founding of the Experimental Cinema of the Philippines, the Metro Manila Film Festival, the revolution of 1986, and international events.

Part II collects the film criticism of the Manunuri, which dissects a few movies exemplifying the commercial genres of classic Filipino cinema and several films belonging to the New Cinema—the movies of Lino Brocka, Ishmael Bernal, Mike de Leon and other directors.

Part III features articles on and interviews with key movie personalities in front or behind the cameras, such as Manuel de Leon, who produced such classics as “Badjao” and “Anak Dalita,” writer Jose Lacaba, and actresses Gloria Romero and Vilma Santos.

THE
URIAN
ANTHOLOGY
1980-1989
KATAR GAN
NICANOR G. TIONGSON
[redacted]

Part IV focuses on the Manunuri, its makeup in the ’80s and the present, its yearly Urian awards, its list of 10 Best Films of the ’80s (complete with synopses) and its lifetime achievement awards.

Part V is a filmography of Filipino movies in the ’80s, with annotations and basic production data.

Present and past Manunuri critics contributing to the anthology are Tiongson, Bienvenido Lumbera, Mario Hernando, Agustin Sotto, Butch Francisco, Grace Javier Alfonso, Nestor Torre, Clodualdo del Mundo Jr., Tezza Parel, Isagani Cruz, Joel David, Pat Cleto, Alfred Yuson, Alice Guillermo, Behn Cervantes, Emmanuel Reyes, Justino Dormiendo, Mario Bautista, Christian Ma. Guerrero, Mike Feria and Joselito Zulueta.

A companion volume to the highly acclaimed “The Urian Anthology 1970-1979,” “The Urian Anthology 1980-1989” is expected to become the most definitive document on the Philippine cinema of the 1980s. It deserves to be on the shelf of every library and appreciated by teachers, students, experts, and all lovers of cinema.

There will be a 20-percent discount on book purchases during the launching. There will also be discounts for those who will avail of the two-month lay-away plan. For orders, call 426-6323 to -28 local 223.

FORMER MTRCB chief Nicanor Tiongson, anthology editor

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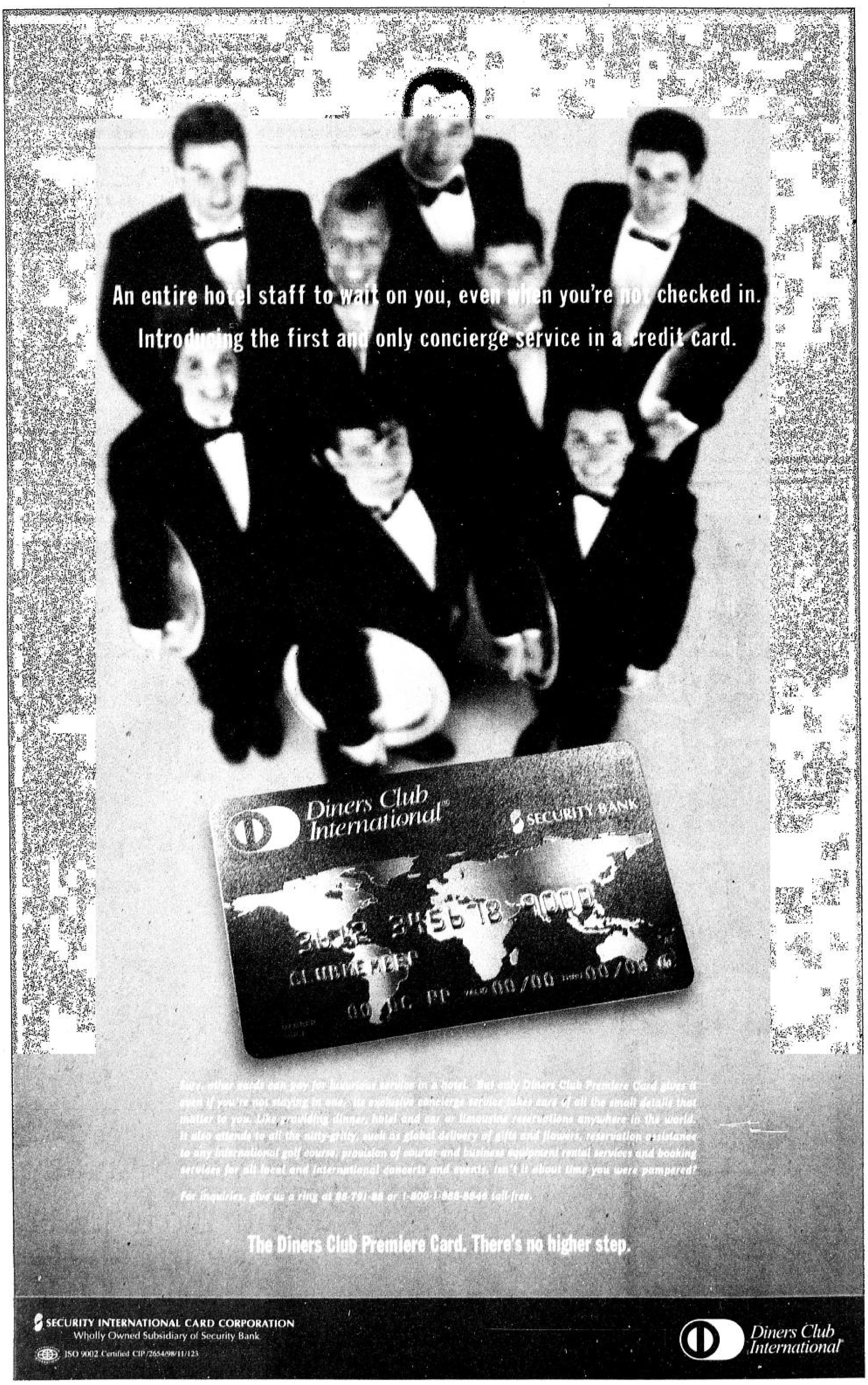
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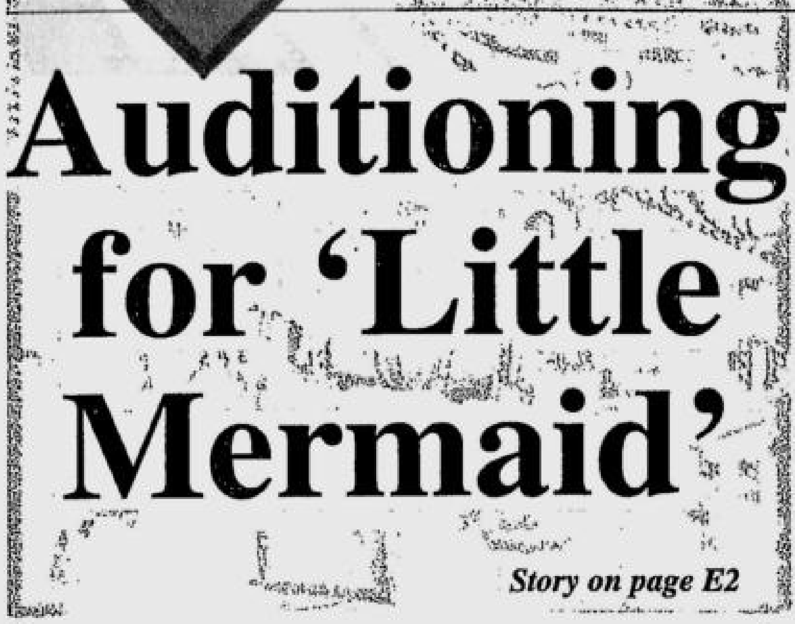

Auditioning for 'Little Mermaid'

Story on page E2

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Auditioning for 'Little Mermaid'

By Audie Gemora

OF STAGE

CASTING a musical is a monumental task. Close to 300 aspirants showed up at our "Little Mermaid" auditions recently and it took two days and several elimination rounds before the cast of 50 was completed. Though I must say we are very happy with end results (We have a fabulous cast), it was no joke.

During the rigorous process, the audition panel made up of "Mermaid's" artistic team couldn't help notice that a lot of really promising talents didn't even get to first base because they did not know how to audition properly. I finally turned to one of "Mermaid's" co-writers, Luna Inocian, and in exasperation announced, "I think an article on how to audition for a musical is in order."

Auditions are held to find the ideal people for the cast. The producer and the artistic team of a show (director, musical director, choreographer, playwright and composer) literally put the prospective performer on trial—to test their abilities and capabilities. There are two types of auditions—closed and open. A theater group or a repertory company usually conducts closed auditions for its members and a few artists who are invited to try out for specific roles. An open audition, or a cattle call, is open to the general public, like the auditions for "Miss Saigon."

Most producers combine the two types—casting lead roles via a closed audition (banking on the experience and drawing power of theater stalwarts and stars) and then opening the audition up for support and chorus roles, possible alternates or understudies for the leads.

Auditions are usually announced by way of print ads or press releases. It is important to read the notice well because it will provide pertinent information about the show and its casting requirements. The ad should tell you what roles are up for grabs (indicating the sex, age and type of characters they are looking for); the show's musical style (operatic, Broadway, rock, etc.); what kind of voices they need (soprano, alto, tenor, baritone, bass); whether there will be dancing and, if so, what form (ballet, jazz, hip hop, gymnastics.)

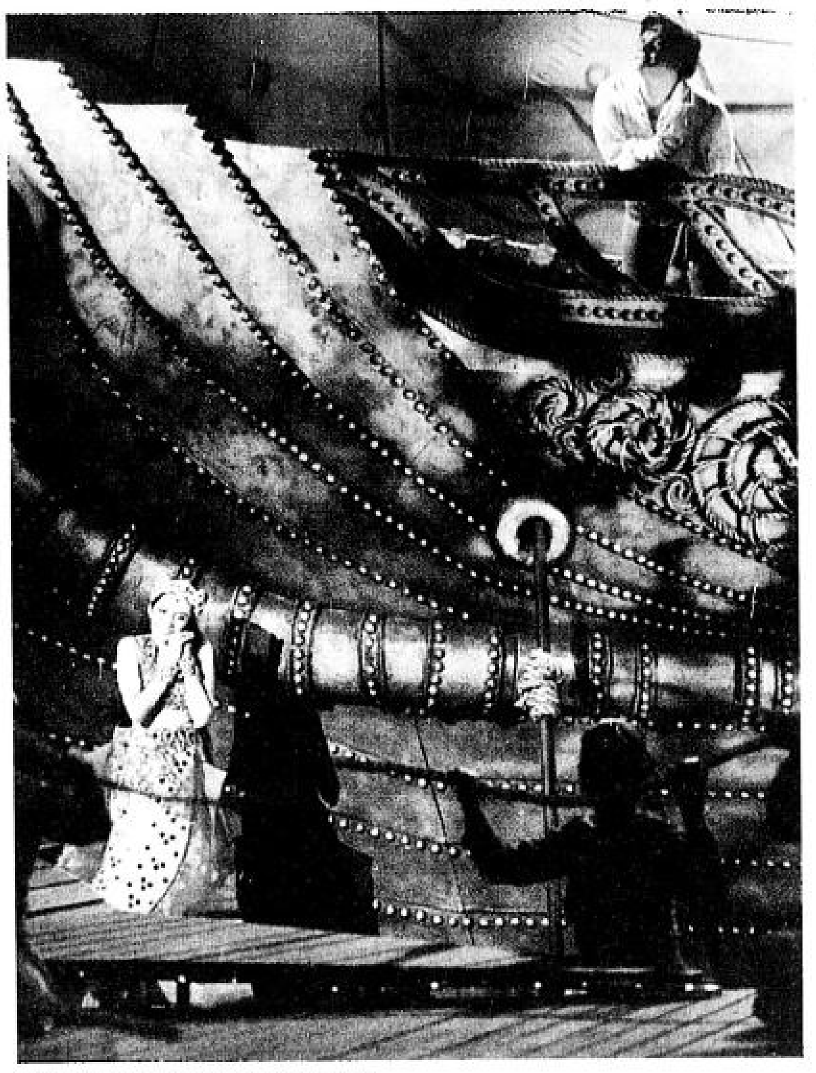
Study the ad carefully and make an honest assessment as to whether you are the type or possess the skills they are looking for. If the search is for a 16-year-old and you are past 30, the odds are against you. If the musical is set in Mississippi but your accent is distinctly more southern Philippines (as in Visayan), you have a problem. If they are holding auditions for a dance musical like "A Chorus Line" and you have two left feet, save yourself the embarrassment and wait for a show more suited to your skills.

The notice will most certainly ask you to bring a resumé and photos. Make sure your resumé is thorough and your pictures flattering. Otherwise, the casters will have no visual peg to identify you with and you will disappear under piles of application forms.

Note the date and time of the audition. Go early (say two hours before the designated time because you will have to sign up for a slot on a first come-first serve basis. Auditions are long drawn out and, by the end of the day, the panel conducting the tryouts may already suffer from audio-visual overload. The earlier you come, the more attentive (and forgiving) the panel is.

Come prepared

Going to an audition is like taking an exam. The better prepared you are the better your chances at passing. On Broadway and the West End, the competition is so fierce that unemployed actors keep honing their craft even as they wait on tables in between jobs. By the time auditions come, they are ready to compete against the hundreds of thousands going out for the same limited roles. Though we haven't quite gotten to that level of competitiveness yet, there are fewer productions and therefore, fewer choice roles up for grabs. So take lessons in acting, voice and dance and doing shows for the experience will certainly help prepare you in the event of an audition. At the very least, know your audition piece! Remember, your audition piece is crucial! Pick an audition song that will show off your voice. It must be an acting song, preferably from the show you are trying out for.


FANTASTIC set of "Mermaid"

When I first auditioned for "Miss Saigon" in 1988, I sang the gospel song "Upon This Rock" and didn't make the cut. When I auditioned the following year for the New York production, I performed the intense "Oh What A Circus" from "Evita" and made it to the top of the list. David Caddick, the musical director exclaimed, "I don't know how we missed you the first time!" When I told him I had earlier sung a gospel song, he gave me a valuable pointer, "Never sing a religious song because whatever it is you are feeling inside is too personal to make an impression on the casting panel. Sing a song that will show off your acting ability because that's what will help casters see you in a role." Now, why I never got to perform in New York is another story. Suffice it to say the song you choose to perform at an audition can make or break you.

Bring accompaniment for your song—a music piece or a minus one. Singing a cappella is a major point against you. The panel cannot tell if you can follow a tune if you have no accompaniment. Besides, the music is a big help as people tend to go off-key without accompaniment.

So pick a music piece that is easy to play. Remember that the pianist provided by the production is playing extemporaneously and could falter and ruin your audition. I've seen this happen.

If you are using a minus one, make sure it is cued! Nothing can be more inconsiderate and annoying as having a whole panel wait as you cue your cassette! And memorize the song! You simply should not and must not hold a *kodigo* or *piesa*. Because of time constraints, very often, aspirants will be given only 15 bars to sing. It is advisable for the "auditionee" to pick the musical/emotional climax of a song and begin the audition from there. Starting high will make a better impact. Avoid pop ballads, they are no better than religious songs. I remember this guy who chose a Martin Nievera ballad with the longest musical intro. By the time he opened his mouth to sing, the director said, "Thank you."

Some people actually came to "Mermaid" auditions without a song prepared and had to be cajoled into singing "Happy Birthday"! Why should the panel bother listening to someone who didn't bother to prepare? My advice to anyone contemplating on auditioning just for fun, go to a KTV bar instead.

Dress appropriately

I was appalled to see someone actually come to "Mermaid" tryouts in a fatty shirt, shorts and slippers—*pambahay* in other words! He looked like he just got up from a *siesta* or was sleep walking. KC Concepcion's driver was better dressed! To make a good first impression, you must dress appropriately.

If you have no idea what the roles are like, come in nondescript rehearsal/dance clothes. That way the director can see possibilities. Minimal makeup for girls, absolutely none on boys! If you know what role is being auditioned for and you are going for something specific, dressing up in character might help. Don't go overboard and come in full costume though. Just a hint will suffice. Bring extra clothes in case you are made to dance and need to change later on. Wear shoes you can dance in.

Audition proper

Make sure you have warmed up your voice before it's your turn. Don't be ashamed to vocalize even while in queue with other hopefuls. Limber up as well. When the body is worked up, the voice comes out better. Take deep breaths to relax (although being nervous is natural and can even be advantageous if you use the nerves to pump up your adrenaline. This in turn will give you the energy and presence needed to turn in an electrifying performance).

Walk into the hall or onstage confidently. Greet the panel to break the ice. They will always be courteous and, if time permits, will engage you in small talk as you give your music to either the pianist or spinner. Walk to a designated spot (usually marked by an "X" at the center of the room or stage). Be sure to listen and respond accordingly. When you get to the spot, stand squarely, face front and look either directly at the panel or above their heads. Sing clearly, loudly. Avoid moving too much or gesticulating unnecessarily. Less is more!

You should have done your homework and researched the song you are performing—that is, consider the show from which the song came, its story, the character who sings it and why he's singing it and feel the song accordingly. Avoid "overacting." Your interpretation may not be that of the director's and you'll only shoot yourself in the foot.

The panel will stop your singing with a "Thank you." A good indication that you have made a good impression on them is if they let you finish the song. If they interview you at length after the number it means they are interested in you. Any which case, thank them, pick up your music and exit. Running time is anywhere between 1-3 minutes.

Don't call us

Auditions normally go through several rounds. After the first round, production people "call back" a percentage of those who auditioned, normally double or triple the number of cast members required. This can come by way of a phone call, thus the "don't call us we'll call you" line. Callbacks are asked to come back for another round of singing and dance auditions. Those vying for lead roles are often made to read. Deliberations are made over a period after which the producer and artistic team decide on the final cast and announcements are made via phone call from the project director. One of the sweetest sentences an actor can hear over the phone is this: "You've made the cast—rehearsals start next month, see you there."

Remember that auditions are a positive initiative by a certain production. The people behind this want to find good talent and are open to new prospects. So even if auditioning is in effect putting yourself under scrutiny by a panel of "judges," bear in mind that they are hoping to discover good talent and want desperately for you to succeed. They are on your side!

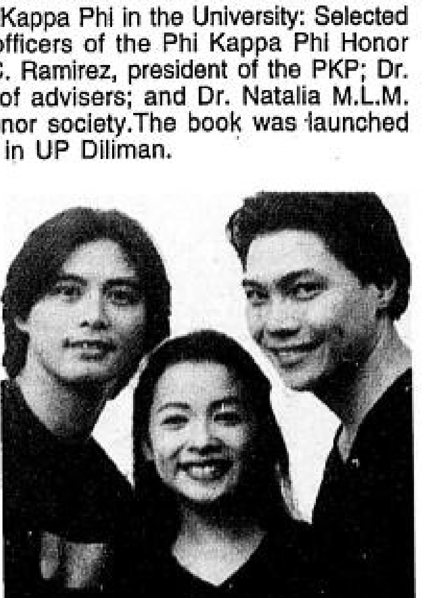
But theater hopefuls must take auditions seriously and prepare to give it their best shot. Auditioning can be thrilling and making it to the wonderful world of musical theater is going to be a truly enriching experience. There are several musical productions underway for the remainder of the year, "Secret Garden" by Repertory Philippines, "Promises, Promises" by AAI, a Tagalog version of "Man of La Mancha" by Tanghalang Pilipino and "Young King" by Trumpets. It's worth a try, don't you think?

"The Little Mermaid" will run at the Meralco Theater until Sept. 9. Call Trumpets (633-5010) or Ticketworld (891-5610 or -5527).

PHI KAPPA PHI

Fr. Bienvenido Nebres, S.J., president of the Ateneo de Manila University, receives a copy of "Phi Kappa Phi in the University: Selected Papers in the '90s" from three officers of the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society. From left: Prof. Carmen C. Ramirez, president of the PKP; Dr. Sylvia H. Guerrero of the board of advisers; and Dr. Natalia M.L.M. Morales, vice president of the honor society.The book was launched recently at the Bahay ng Alumni in UP Diliman.

PLAY ON RIZAL'S 'NOLI'


Ruggedly handsome Richard Quan (left) is Crisostomo Ibarra in Gantimpala Theater's production of Jomar Fleras' "Kanser," a dramatization of Jose Rizal's novel "Noli Me Tangere." Mon Confiado is Elias while Adriana Agcaoili is Maria Clara. Directed by Mia Gutierrez, the play goes onstage at the AFP Theater on Aug. 10 and 11 at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., and at the RFC Theater-Cinema in Las Piñas on Aug. 24 and 25 at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Call 897-1533 or -9986, or 895-8314; or e-mail gantimpala@pacific.net.ph; or visit www.geocities.com/gantimpala.

A masterpiece . . .

(From page E4)

Beato) as from its trademark décor and bold coloration. Even in the night scenes, in the hazy *plazoleta* where junkies congregate, in the dusty dumps and dank alleys inhabited by whores and transvestites, one sees primary colors, phosphorescence, brightness.

The music, mostly of guitar and flute, is evocative of gypsy airs and folksongs: "Sparrow," "Choral for My Faraway Little Town."

There are fine performances all around. The dialogue and monologues have a controlled brilliance, something like suppressed laughter.

When Sister Rosa tells Manuela she's going to El Salvador, one is at a loss for words. Is she serious, or just being flippant? What's in El Salvador? When this same Sister Rosa comments, "Prada is perfect for nuns," one wonders why. But then that's just Pedro Almodóvar.

To underscore his idea of actresses being like mothers, and the theme of the act of creation, suffering and redemption, the filmmaker dedicates his *obra maestra* to Bette Davis and to all actresses in the world, as well as to his mother and to all people who want to be mothers. A more touching valentine there is none.

Reynaldo Reyes, Ingrid Santamaria shine in Bangkok

By Pablo A. Tariman

BANGKOK, Thailand—Classical music—or at least the classical musicians—are alive and kicking in this Asian City famous for its palaces and awesome Buddhist temples.

Bangkok musicians and music lovers were present in the welcome dinner at the Landmark Hotel arranged by Fr. John Cef Ledesma who cracked a joke about the alleged music emanating from Beethoven's as Beethoven decomposing.

The venues for recitals and orchestral concerts are the Thailand Cultural Center and the city's National Theater. For intimate concerts, there's the Piyabhand Sanitwongse Foundation Auditorium (named after a pianist-composer and pedagogue) where two Petroff grand pianos grace the hall. We met Ajan (this is the title of respect given to Thai national artists) Piyabhand, and after lunch, we repaired to his living room and lo and behold, he has four grand pianos—a Steinway and a Bosendorfer in the receiving area, and another two full grand pianos in the music room.

We later found out that Ajan Piyabhand (now in his late 60s) was a prizewinner of the Scottish International Piano Competition and had actively concertized in many cities. He turned to teaching later, helped organize the Bangkok naval orchestra and today, he is an exponent of classical music in Thailand.

Speaking of smaller but equally commendable venues in terms of excellent acoustics, another excellent venue is the Seventh Day Adventist Church at the Mission Hospital on Pitsanuloke Road where the Coo family (Jonathan, Cecilia and Victor Michael) had earlier performed courtesy of the doctor-impresario, Dr. Elvie Villanueva.

There is an active Chopin Society in Bangkok under Lucia Menchavez Thangsu Phanich, a Filipina pianist and piano lessons are pursued by middle upper-class families. I saw some of them in the master class conducted by Baltimore-based Filipino pianist Reynaldo Reyes and many of them were indeed very promising, like Chonnikarn Jira playing Liszt's Etude de Paganini No. 6 and Jessica Ng playing Haydn's Sonata in C Major, Hob XVI/50.

But the most remarkable was 14-year-old Wasin Prasertlarp who played Albeniz's "Castilla" with such youthful flair he reminded me of then 13-year-old Makie Misawa who placed No. 6 in the Curtis auditions five years ago (No. 1 was Lang Lang who is now making waves in New York).

As you attend the master class and watch the rehearsals of pianists Ingrid Sala Santamaria and Reynaldo Reyes before the concert, you are tempted to browse over the reading materials lining the walls of the concert hall. The Piyabhand Sanitwongse Auditorium is surrounded by hundreds of books, including music books and music scores from art songs to sonatas and concertos.

An excellent book is David Dubal's "The World of the Concert Pianist," which features interviews with 35 internationally acclaimed pianists from Claudio Arrau to Gary-Graffman and Alicia de Larrocha, among others.

(As we gush over the hall's full grand pianos, I started to condition Santamaria and Reyes' minds that after this Bangkok concert, it would be back to upright and not-so-good baby grand pianos when we return to the country and head for Catanduanes for a concert. And quoting from the mentor of Arrau, I told Santamaria and Reyes with all the "pedagogic" authority I could muster, "Everybody can play well on a good piano but the trick is to be able to play well on a bad piano.")

INGRID Santamaria and Reynaldo Reyes (second and third from left, respectively) in Bangkok with Thai pianists Indhuon Srikaranonda, Thai national artist Piyabhand Sanitwongse and Lithuanian pianist Artas Balakauskas.

This Grieg, Schumann, Tchaikovsky and now Rachmaninoff (No. 2) concertos were part of a musical journey that started in Cebu and Manila. The orchestral reproduction on the piano was as exciting (remember this was Reyes playing the role of the orchestra).

Under Santamaria and with Reyes on the second piano, the Schumann concerto took surprising turns; a more grand and elegant entrance, a soulful second movement, and well-orchestrated finale. I guess the Tchaikovsky finally found an even match in the Petroff pianos. The two pianists unleashed a keyboard power that elicited prolonged applause from the Thai audience. Visibly moved, Ajan Piyabhand himself offered the post-concert bouquet.

Present in the first concert of Schumann and Tchaikovsky concertos at the Sanitwongse Auditorium was Thai pianist Suda Banomyong (a daughter of a former prime minister of Thailand) and classmate of Reyes at the Paris Conservatoire 47 years ago.

At the Seventh Day Adventist Church, with two Yamaha baby grands, Santamaria played the Grief and Rachmaninoff (No. 2) concertos with remarkable brio and elan. The excellent acoustics allowed the listeners to savor the middle movements with astounding clarity and the contrasts to the first and last movements were not lost on the audience.

Present in the second concert was another Thai composer and national artist, Maurat Srikaranonda, whose daughter, Indhuon, is herself an accomplished pianist and married to Lithuianian pianist Artas Balakauskas.

Judging from the audience response, it was clear that the two Filipino pianists made a lasting impression on Thai audiences.

Here and there

OUR congratulations to film director Marilou Diaz Abaya for receiving the 12th Fukuoka Arts and Culture Prize. She was the second Filipino to receive it (the first was architect now National Artist Leandro Locsin). Among local filmmakers, Abaya is one of the few—if not the only one—who uses the services of legitimate classical musician in scoring her films. The other music-friendly filmmakers are the late Ishmael Bernal and Peque Gallaga (his "Oro, Plata, Mata" was made more grand and eloquent with the presence of operatic arias). I think Abaya will take a break from the shooting of her latest film, "Mindanao," to listen to Cecile Licad on Aug. 17. Licad and Abaya became instant friends when they met on April 6 for PPO's Rachmanioff's Second Concerto.

* * *

Some 20 paintings will be on exhibit in the latest one-woman exhibit of Rocell "Baby" Valencia at the Heritage Art Gallery (Glorietta 4) in Makati City on Aug. 30. Where she lives in Tagaytay, Baby is surrounded by nature and classical music. Before she made a name as a painter, Baby was known as the daughter of the late noted columnist Ka Doroy Valencia.

* * *

The Manila Symphony Orchestra 2 will debut on Sept. 1 at St. Cecilia's Hall. For tickets, call 524-7686.

* * *

"Bravo Filipino" is a concert series at the Francisco Santiago Hall and a radio program in dzFE, the country's only classical music station. I think CCP's Filipino Artists Series should use another name to publicize its season to avoid confusion among ticket buyers.

Meanwhile, we received a text message that the free outdoor concert series, Paco Park Presents, will be discontinued due to lack of funds. Shouldn't anyone come to the rescue? This is the only free concert where people can go to on weekends to hear classical music.

* * *

The Grieg and Tchaikovksy concertos will be heard for the first time in Virac, Catanduanes on Aug. 11 at the Provincial Capitol Grand Lobby. Interpreters are pianists Ingrid Sala Santamaria and Reynaldo Reyes. For details, call Red Cross OIC Dave Templonuevo at (052) 811-2279. Among those who have performed in Catanduanes in the last 10 years are tenor Gary del Rosario, soprano Luz Morete, pianists Lourdes de Leon Gregorio, Mary Anne Espina and Najib Ismail, violinists Alexander Tomescu, Joseph Esmilla and Donnie Fernandez, flutist Tony Maigue and guitarist Lester Demetillo and cellist Victor Michael Coo.

New musical blurs gender lines

BY CORA LLAMAS

THE FLASHING lights wash the stage with color, amid the loud, driving music, which sounds like a cross between Queen and David Bowie. And the singer on stage holds court, totally in control, fully aware of her magic. The high-energy concert is soaring, with the audience riding on its wings, with blissfully no ceiling in sight.

Then the music slows down a little. And the singer begins talking. About herself. To you. About her life, her loves, the dreams of getting out of the seedy bars she's stuck in right now. Coming up close, the lady is carrying a huge load on her shoulders. You find out why the next second when she confesses candidly, soberly, about her botched sex operation.

It turns out that the lady used to be a man, after all. And the band she's touring now is named in honor of that humiliating mark that incompetent surgery had performed on her person, worn partly as a defiant badge of honor.

The sex operation was the only way for Hedwig, an East German national, to get out of a country just coping with the fall of the Berlin Wall. An American GI could take him to the border as his wife, if Hedwig could prove to the authorities physically that he was a woman, not a man.

First offering

The concert metamorphoses into a play, simply titled after the main character, his misfortune and his music, "Hedwig and the Angry Inch." It is also Atlantis Productions' first theatrical offering for the year, opening on Aug. 10 at the Equitable PCIBank Auditorium. The concert-theater-cum-rock musical is written by John Cameron Mitchell and the music and lyrics composed by Stephen Trask. "Hedwig" is the winner of the Obie Award and Outer Critics' Circle Award for Outstanding Off-Broadway Musical. A movie based on the musical is now playing in the US.

The blurring of pivotal lines, sexual, political and societal, or even the boundary between the real and the unreal, has always been a favorite staple of Atlantis. Last year's "Jesus Christ Superstar" placed the reins of power on a female Pilate and an amazon militia. The blockbuster hit "Rent" rocked with gender-bender celebrations. "Hedwig" promises a more in-depth, no-holds barred and very adult examination of identity and sexuality.

"Much of this show is about sexual ambiguity," director Bobby Garcia confirms. "It's about who is your other half: is it a man or a woman? Is having breasts the definition of a woman? It throws all these questions at the audience."

But "it's not rated R, it has no nudity," Garcia says. "But the language can be provocative. Hedwig is certainly not afraid to talk about his life, which includes a botched sex operation. It leaves him emotionally scarred. There's no penis or vagina where something should be. That part of his body has nothing."

WHICH IS WHICH? "Pretty" Jake Macapagal and "tough" Lana Jalosjos

The physical vacuum also speaks of an emotional one. The rock band's tour is actually a quest. Hedwig and his back-up singer/lover Yitzhak are in search of something or someone that can complete them both.

Being complete

"It's not just about a guy in a dress," claims Jake Macapagal who plays the title character. "As you go through the show, you realize that it's about him [and Yitzhak] being complete. Whether [he achieves it through] a lover or a piece of work, the play is finding about what makes one whole as a person. Hopefully, as you watch the play, you can identify with that person finding himself."

Not surprisingly, understanding the Other—or the person who's outside one's normal familial, communal, ethical, religious and class milieu—runs through the rock musical like invisible electricity. In "Rent," scholastic dropouts, AIDS victims, radical filmmakers, bar dancers, gays and the other members of society's fringe bonded together and celebrated life under the shadow of death. "How I Learned to Drive" pleaded for compassion for the pedophiles, without condoning their behavior.

Along the same lines, "Hedwig" is "all about acceptance," says Garcia. "People come in all shapes, sizes and forms. Let's not try to bang our head for them to make sense to us. Because even if they may not, it doesn't mean that they don't make sense to the rest of the world."

Actually, Yitzhak who's the henpecked husband to Hedwig's in-control drag queen, is played by a woman. As written in the script, the character is male (not a transsexual or gay) but is required to be performed by a female actress. Watching a bearded, made-to-look-like-butch Lana Jalosjos interact with Macapagal in drag would heighten the challenge for the audience to make sense of the sexual ambiguities in the play.

Not wobbly

Garcia half-jokingly remarked that he cast Macapagal in the lead role "because he looked good in a dress and he doesn't wobble in heels." Macapagal, an alumnus of "Miss Saigon" in Stuttgart, Germany, had played the jolly gay Angel in the Atlantis-produced, Singapore-based "Rent" a few months ago. It will be his first performance in Manila after many years. Prior to landing the "Saigon" stint, Macapagal had appeared in Philippine productions of "Once on an Island," "Les Miserables" and "My Fair Lady."

Macapagal's stage other-half, Jalosjos, is studying human resources management at the University of the Philippines, with a few music classes on the side.

Jalosjos, who had played the dying but still fighting, passionate Mimi in "Rent" Singapore, was chosen for Yitzhak "because she could sing the high vocals. It's a very vocal part," Garcia elaborates. "Yitzhak is very resentful of how Hedwig pushed him to the background—and he's supposed to be more talented than Hedwig. There's something unresolved in his life, and he, too, is on a quest."

The intrinsic vulnerability of the characters, slowly breaking through the shouting, is probably the most challenging part of the production. Macapagal summarizes it as "tearing it as your heart open. 'This is who I am.'"

It's tough enough to do that in real life with people you know and family you love. One can only imagine the courage for this transsexual to unveil this revelation, and for Atlantis to do it not for laughs.

Atlantis' production of "Hedwig and the Angry Inch" will run on Aug. 10 to Sept. 1 at the Equitable PCI Bank Auditorium, Makati Avenue. Call 892-7078.

PINKY Marquez

HARLENE Bautista-Sarmenta

ARLENE Borja

'Vagina Monologues' in Filipino

THIS August "The Vagina Monologues" will rock Manila once again, this time in a Filipino translation. The translations are by award-winning Filipina playwrights Dr. Glecy Atienza, Dr. Joi Barrios and Luna Sicat. NVC associate artistic directors Rito Asilo and Andrew Vergara direct the Filipino and English versions, respectively. The Filipino version opens on Aug. 31 at the Music Museum and runs until Sept. 15.

Following the tradition of international productions of "The Vagina Monologues," the NVC productions continue to feature critically acclaimed actresses from film, TV, recording and theater. The Filipino version at the Music Museum features exciting and dynamic Filipina artists Arlene Borja, Pinky Marquez and Harlene Bautista-Sarmenta. Talented newcomer Missy Maramara understudies all the parts. The English version currently touring the Philippines features original cast member Tami Monsod with Lyn Sherman and Lara Fabregas. Next stop is a repeat run in Cebu by the end of September.

The Filipino version of the play features new excerpts and cultural "adaptation" references to make the issues of the play more relevant in a Philippine context.

As part of the V-Day International Events for 2002, NVC is hosting worldwide events in the Philippines, Hong Kong and Singapore. The Manila worldwide event will be at the Meralco Theater on Feb. 9, 2002 with a theatrical concert titled "Kababaihan," a benefit featuring "The Vagina Monologues" with Philippines music, dance, poetry and visual interplay. The concert will feature over 80 Filipina artists and will raise funds for groups working to end violence against women.

As part of the V-Day Events, NVC will also launch a Regional/College Initiative Campaign involving grassroots organizations, colleges and community groups to raise funds for women's groups around the Philippines, Hong Kong and Singapore. NVC's Monique Wilson has recently been appointed by V-Day New York as assistant director-international coordinator for the College Campaigns all over Southeast Asia.

"The Vagina Monologues" is based on a series of interviews on women's most private parts. The award-winning play discusses relationships, marriage, rape, childbirth, violence against women, sex, infidelity, pelvic exams, sexual abuse, among other issues. It gives voice to a chorus of lusty, outrageous, exciting, dynamic, poignant, hilarious and life-hanging stories that have changed people's lives all over the world. After seeing "The Vagina Monologues," no one man or woman will look at themselves, or the world, the same way again.

Call the NVC office at 896-5497/6695 or 899-0630 (telefax) or e-mail nvcpost@hotmail.com. All V-Day inquiries may e-mail newvoicecompany@aol.com.

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A masterpiece quietly comes to Manila

SPANISH director Pedro Almodóvar at work

By Constantino C. Tejero

ONLY a few probably know that Pedro Almodóvar's masterpiece, "Todo sobre Mi Madre" (All about My Mother), had been screened in the country. The film was seen only on VHS, CD and cable, until Instituto Cervantes screened it last June 28, almost two years after its worldwide release.

One wonders why they did not show it at last year's Cine Europa.

The institute's intimate Sala de Actos was filled to capacity. One could see many Filipino moviegoers were hungry for such fare.

A big winner at last year's Oscars, the Spanish masterpiece grabbed the Best Foreign Language Film award from such competitors as France's "East-West" and the United Kingdom's "Solomon and Gaenor" (both screened in the country earlier). Surprisingly, it was Almodóvar's first film to be accepted for competition at Cannes, where he won the Best Director award.

The movie is Almodóvar's paean to a mother's unconditional love. It is peopled by his usual kooky characters and done in his usual provocative way, though not with the same degree of derangement as in his early films. Maybe he no longer feels the need to grab the viewer's throat as he is now approaching the level of the masters.

There's a warmth and glow about this film, a poignancy in the story, a touching naïveté in its telling, as in those black-and-white movies from the Golden Age of Hollywood. In fact, Joseph Mankiewicz's "All about Eve" and Tennessee Williams' "A Streetcar Named Desire" permeate the whole film.

Society's outcasts

And, like those great sentimentalists, Almodóvar never stints on the big emotions. Grief is pitched to such an intensity that the entire film becomes an essay on mourning.

When hardworking nurse Manuela (the Argentine Cecilia Roth) sees her teenage son Esteban (Eloy Azorin) hit by a speeding car on a Madrid street, the camera runs with her to the spot, the sound boom catches her outcry. Then in a low-angle shot, from the blood-splattered ground, we see her great face distorted by grief as she howls, as if wanting the world to hear, "My son, my son!"

This scene alone would out-Hollywood Hollywood. But Almodóvar, ever defiant of convention or taste, wouldn't stop at that. He has the mother follow the various body parts of her son being donated to several people. She travels to La Coruña in northwest Spain to spy on a woman who has just had a heart transplant.

Asked by a friend where she has been, Manuela replies in a voice choked with emotion: "I went after my son's heart."

That scene could have been morbid, but in Almodóvar's hand it became a source of enlightenment on mother's love. And you choke, watching, enraptured and infinitely sad.

When she loses her son, instead of closing in on itself, Manuela's maternal instinct expands to include the outcasts of society, the derelicts and the downtrodden, drug junkies like the young actress Niña (Candela Peña), the transsexual prostitute La Agrado the Agreeable (Antonia San Juan), the pregnant HIV-positive nun Sister Rosa (Penélope Cruz), the aging stage dame and lesbian Bette Davis wannabe Huma Rojo (Marisa Paredes), even her son's estranged father, the transsexual Lola la Pionera (Toni Cantó).

Tabloid world

Common to these colorful characters are pain, separation and loss, They are family.

The film traces the intertwining of their lives, from Madrid to Barcelona, while showing the enclave of Spain's upper crust, the sleazy backstage of the theater, as well as the seamy side of Spanish society. This is the same tabloid world once explored by Lorca.

Like every other Almodóvar film, this one has a distinctive look, which comes not so much from an unusual camerawork (by Brazilian Affonso

A MASTERPIECE/ p.E2

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